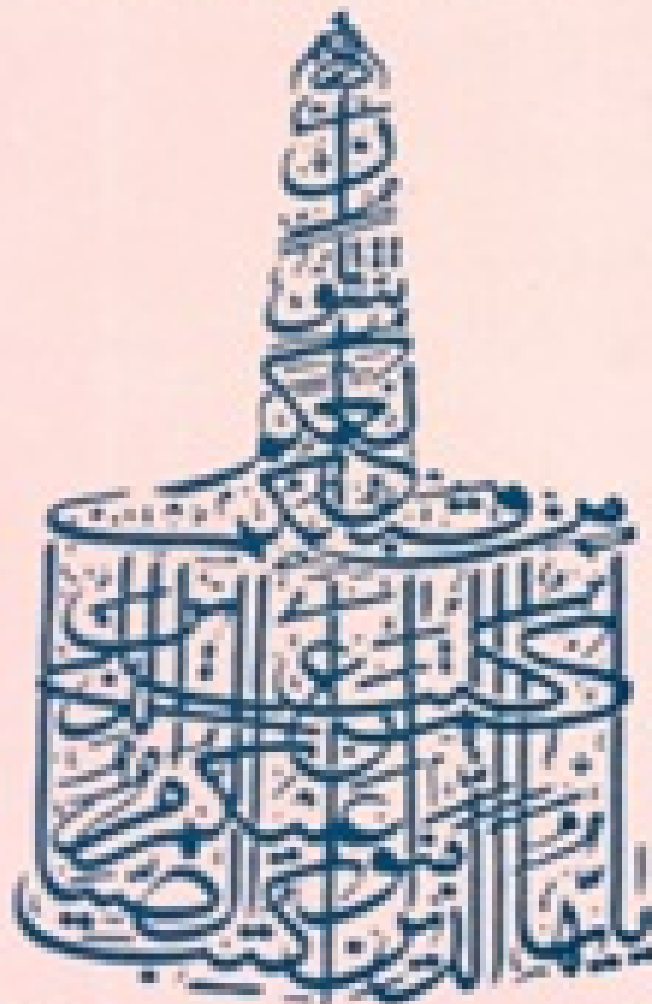
FAST OF THE MONTH OF RAMADAN: PHILOSOPHY AND AHKAM

By

Yasin T. al-Jibouri



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Fast of the Month of Ramadhan Philosophy and Ahkam

BOOK ID

Author(s): Yasin T. Al-Jibouri

Category: Fasting

Featured Category: Muslim Practices

point

This text includes fasting in history, benefits of fasting, types of fasts, and the Prophet's preaching on Ramadhan. Also includes other articles on the Night of Power, .and Invocations for Ramadhan

Dedication

O you who believe! Fast is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before" you so that you may ward off (evil). (Fast) a certain number of days..." (Qur'an Surah (Baqarah ٢:١٨٢-١٨٣

***

To the best man who ever walked on earth or ascended to heaven... To the one for whom the whole world was created... To the one whom I never saw yet in whom I firmly believe and whom I passionately love, in whose footsteps I try my best to follow, and who I very much hope to see in the life to come, though I know I am not ...worthy of it... To the master of mankind and jinns

To the one who perfected the code of ethics and who was sent as a mercy for all creation: to

Muhammad

The prophet and messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and his pure and sinless progeny, peace and blessings that shall keep multiplying so long

...as the sun rises in the east and sets in the west

Hoping he will accept this humble book as a gift and intercede on my behalf on the day ,of judgment with the judge of judges and lord of lords to forgive my sins

p: ١

faults, shortcoming, and transgressions, to permit me to meet his prophet and messenger Muhammad and his pure and sinless progeny, to help me stay on the path of righteousness, and to help me guide through the medium of this book as many of ...my Muslim brethren as he pleases thereto

!Allahu akbar! Allahu akbar! Allahu akbar

Introduction

In the Name of Allh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

There are, no doubt, many books written in English that deal with fast and the month of Ramadhan; however, most of them, from my viewpoint, do not do justice to the institution of fast, to the month of Ramadhan, the greatest of all months, nor to .Lailatul-Qadr, the Night of Destiny

Most available books seem to concentrate on the undeniable individual and social benefits of the fast, providing very little detail of what bliss awaits those who properly .observe the fast

This book emphasizes the rewards such persons may receive as soon as their souls depart from their bodies at the moment of "death." Also, an entire chapter in this book detailing the rewards of reciting each of the ۱۱۴ Qur'anic chapters is included in order .to encourage the believers to recite the Holy Qur'an more often

One may wonder why heaven, hell, al-Sirat al-Mustaqeem (the Straight Path) are discussed in a book dealing with the fast. Islam emphasizes the significance of regarding this life as no more nor less than a golden and unique opportunity to prepare for the real life

to come, the eternal one. Death is briefly discussed in this book because it is an issue which concerns all of us; it is the inevitable end of the existence of our present frail and fragile form and shape; it is the beginning of a new existence the significance of .which is not realized by most people

This is something which we must not forget even for a moment. The grave of a good believer, one who observes the fast and all other obligations, will be a miniature Paradise, whereas that of a disbeliever, or of a believer who did not honor Allah's commandments as he should have, will be a piece snatched out of hell, a place filled with various means of torture; all of this will take place even prior to the Day of .Resurrection. This is why there is so much emphasis in this book on the life hereafter

It is important to inform the discreet reader, especially one who likes to research and verify the contents of this book, that the vast majority of its text is a direct translation into English of excerpts from books written in Arabic. The authors of these books are held in very high esteem by scholars of Islamic studies. Those authors took pains to .compile and verify their information before recording it

The primary source for this book is the edition of Bihar al-Anwar al-Jami'a li Durar Akhbar al-A'immah al-Athar (oceans of inclusive light of precious tales relevant to the righteous

Imams) of the great mentor, author, translator, compiler, and philosopher Shaykh Muhammad Baqir al-Majlisi (١٠٣٧ - ١١١١ A.H.) published in ١۴٠٣ A.H. (١٩٨٣ A.D.) by Al-Wafa Foundation (Beirut, Lebanon) in ١١٠ volumes, not counting Vol. ٠ (zero) which deals in its entirety with the book itself and with its author. Misbah al-Kaf'ami (al-Kaf'ami's lantern), another major reference, is authored by Shaykh Taqi al-Deen ibn Ibrahim ibn Ali ibn al-Hassan ibn Muhammad ibn Salih-al-'Amili al-Kaf'ami and .(published in ١۴١٢ A.H. (١٩٩٢ A.D.) by Al-Nu'man Foundation (Beirut, Lebanon

Another very important reference utilized is Usool al-Kafi (basics of what suffices) by Thiqatul-Islam Muhammad Ya'qoob al-Kulayni (reviewed and verified by Muhammad Ja'far Shams ad-Deen) and published by Dar al-Ta'aruf (Beirut, Lebanon) in ١۴١١ A.H. (١٩٩٠ A.D.). Two other references consulted are Al-Amali aw al-Majalis and Man la Yahduruhu al-Faqih ([a book written for] whoever has no access to a jurist) by the great mentor Shaykh Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn Babawayh al-.(.Qummi al-Saduq (٣٠۶ - ٣٨١ A.H

Both are published by al-A'lami Foundation (Beirut, Lebanon) in ١۴١٠ A.H. (١٩٩٠ A.D.) and in ١۴٠۶ A.H. (١٩٨۶ A.D.) respectively. Al-Mizan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an (the balance in the exegesis of the Qur'an) by Sayyid Muhammad Husayn al-Tabatabai, who was born in ١٣٢١ A.H. (١٨٩٢ A.D.) and died in ١۴٠١ A.H. (١٩٩١ A.D.), has also been utilized, and so have .scores of other books

Regaring the Qur'anic verses cited in this book, their English translation employed is the one undertaken by M.H. Shakir, but I

have not adhered to such a translation to the letter; rather, I have often edited it wherever I deemed necessary. As a matter of fact, Tahrike-Tarsile-Qur'an (Distribution of Holy Qur'an, Inc.) of New York had commissioned me to edit the sixth U.S. edition (۱۹۹۰) of the said translation, a task which I, Alhamdu-Lillah, accomplished (including typesetting the entire text) in the winter of ۱۹۹۳. Before then, I had finished editing (for the same publisher) the English translations of the Holy Qur'an by Mir Ahmed Ali and by Abdullah Yousuf Ali. Unfortunately, all of these three editions are yet .to be printed

It truly amazes me, as an Arab, to see that all existing translations of the Holy Qur'an were undertaken by non-Arabs. With reference to the three I have edited, M.H. Shakir is Iranian, Mir Ahmed Ali is Pakistani, and Abdullah Yousuf Ali is Indian! Does this mean that Arabs are incapable of translating the book of Allah, which was revealed in their .own tongue, into English?! I don't think so

To the best of my knowledge, the latest such translation, which at the same time is the first done by an American, is Dr. T.B. Irving's (who adopted the Muslim name al-Hajj Ta’lim ‘Ali) and is titled The Qur'an: The Noble Reading. It was published in ۱۹۹۳ by The Mother Mosque Foundation of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and I will always cherish the .copy the translator autographed for my family

The Mother Mosque is supposed to be the very first mosque

built in the United States (in ۱۹۳۴), but Gutbi Mahdi Ahmed suggests in The Muslims of America (New York: Oxford University Press, ۱۹۹۱) that the "earliest mosque in America" was in Ross, North Carolina, a mosque which was demolished (due to aging and improper maintenance) in ۱۹۷۹, that the mosque in Michigan City, Indiana, was built in ۱۹۳۲, and that Moors in America built their mosques as early as ۱۹۱۹. Speaking of mosques, there are now more than a thousand mosques in the U.S. where an .estimated eight million Muslims live

It may not be out of place here to take a look at the history of various English translations of the Holy Qur'an; so, please allow me to state the following, and please :help me find one native speaker of Arabic among these translators

It was in ۱۶۴۹ when Alexander Ross produced the first English version of the Holy Qur'an, but he did not translate it from Arabic; rather, he relied on Du Ryer's French translation of the Holy Qur'an. In ۱۷۳۴, George Sale's became the very first English translation of the Holy Qur'an from the Arabic, a translation which remained in circulation for ۱۲۷ years during which it was reprinted at least seventeen times till, in ۱۸۶۱, J.M. Rodwell rendered his own English translation of the Holy Qur'an into poetic .prose. In ۱۸۸۰, E.H. Palmer published his own translation

The year ۱۹۰۵ made history: it witnessed the very first English translation of the Holy Qur'an done by a Muslim. All

these translations did not include the original Arabic text till in ۱۹۱۰ when Mirza Abul-Fazl became the first Muslim to include his translation of the Holy Qur'an with the original Arabic text. Abul-Fazl's translation spurred a succession of such translations: .(twelve in six decades (one translation every five years

These translators, chronologically arranged, with the year of their works' publication enclosed in parentheses, are as follows: Muhammad Ali (۱۹۱۷), Ghulam Sarwar (۱۹۲۹), Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall (۱۹۳۰), Abdullah Yousuf Ali (۱۹۳۴), Richard Bell (۱۹۳۷), A.J. Arberry (۱۹۵۵), Sher Ali (۱۹۵۵), N.J. Dawood (۱۹۵۶), Abdul Majid Daryabadi (۱۹۵۷), Mir .(Ahmed Ali (۱۹۶۴), Syed Abdul Lateef (۱۹۶۸), and Zafarullah Khan (۱۹۷۱

In ۱۹۷۲, I came to the U.S. to pursue a graduate degree in English. Four years later (۱۹۷۶), I met at Atlanta's International Airport Sayyid Hashim Amir Ali who handed me a delux copy of his own English translation of the Holy Qur'an published in ۱۹۷۴ by Charles E. Tuttle Company of Tokyo, Japan. Qur'anic chapters in it are arranged chronologically, that is, according to the sequence of revelation, starting from Surat al-Alaq (Chapter ۹۶) and ending with Surat Bara'at or Tawbah (Chapter ۹). This caused an uproar among many Muslim dignitaries, organizations, and governments who .were not used to seeing the Holy Qur'an thus arranged

The translator told me about the financial woes from which he was suffering due to the bad publicity his translation, titled The Message of the Qur'an Presented in Perspective, was then receiving, so I gave it some

exposure in Vol. ۲, No. ۱۴ (Sha’ban and Month of Ramadhan ۱۳۹۶/August and September ۱۹۷۶) of Islamic Affairs, a publication which I and a couple of Pakistani brethren launched in ۱۹۷۴, months after the establishment of our organization the .Islamic Society of Georgia, Inc

In the same year (۱۹۷۶), Shaikh Muhammad Sarwar, of Quetta, Pakistan, came to the U.S. as the very first Shi’a missionary delegated by His Late Holiness Abul-Qasim al-Khoei (۱۹۱۶ - ۱۹۹۲), the then Ayatullah al-Uzma (Supreme or Grand Ayatullah), to cater to the religious and social needs of the Shi’a community in the U.S. and Canada. Al-Khoei was responding to requests he had received from American converts to Shi’a Islam to send them an ‘alim. One of his instructions was to translate the Holy Qur'an into English. His came to be the least known translation of the Holy Qur'an and the least circulated according to the Publisher himself. It was published in ۱۹۷۹ by the afore-mentioned Tahrike-Tarsile-Qur'an which was founded in ۱۹۷۸ by Aun Ali Khalfan .of Dares-Salam, Tanzania

In ۱۹۷۸, I obtained my graduate degree, and in ۱۹۷۹ I moved from Atlanta, Georgia to Hyattsville, Maryland, then got married in ۱۹۸۲ and moved to Arlington, Virginia, where my wife and I founded the International Islamic Society of Virginia, Inc. primarily to resume the publication and distribution of Islamic Affairs which was suspended after my departure from Atlanta, Georgia. While remaining thus busy editing it, I came to be in direct contact with a man whom I very

much admired. He is T.B. Irving whose translation of the Holy Qur'an is, to the best of my knowledge, the very latest and the only one undertaken by an American. It was .printed by Amana Publishers of Vermont

Probably the most impressive are the translator's marvellous style and invaluble textual comments, and the fact that the text is arranged in groups of verses comprising a full thought or theme. In other words, it departs from the usual method .of individually numbering each verse

This may pose a challenge to one who is not familiar with the original Arabic text and who is prone to losing his place and failing to identify where a verse starts and where it ends. And the average reader can be easily intrigued by words which he may not find in other translations: "Diabolis," for example, is used in some verses and Eblis (or Iblis) in others; most proper nouns are anglicized; heavy punctuation is employed, but there are no explanatory footnotes, a glossary, or an index. Irving's seems to me to be more of an attempt to explain than to translate the Holy Qur'an, something which converts to Islam, as well as non-Muslims, can find particularly helpful. But the original ...Arabic Qur'anic text is missing

The reason why I have provided the reader with all these details is to make him realize that I did not choose Shakir's translation of the Holy Qur'an arbitrarily; many .translations of the Holy Qur'an are available at my library, Alhamdu-Lillah

Despite

all my efforts and the efforts of a select few whose advice and suggestions I solicited and appreciated if the reader nevertheless detects any error in this text, I accept full responsibility for it and admit my ignorance and plead to Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala, and to the reader, to forgive me, since He best knows my limitations, faults, and shortcomings. The sad fact is that most original Arabic text translated, then incorporated into this book, lacks accent marks. Only those who are familiar with .Arabic can realize the significance of accentuation in as far as Arabic is concerned

During the period of more than ٧,٥٠٠ years, Arabic has reached a degree of complexity and wealth of diction which no other language in the history of the world has ever reached - or will ever reach. The problem is compounded when you try to convey the meaning of an Arabic sentence or phrase into a language as young as English, one whose vocabulary, compared to that of Arabic, is quite limited, even sadly poor. Although the meanings of most Arabic words used in this text are either enclosed in parentheses or explained in a footnote, a Glossary is included at the end of this book .for the benefit of non-Arab or non-Muslim readers

We pray Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala to cover our faults, overlook our shortcomings, and enable us to enlighten the readers with knowledge which may benefit them in the ,...life of this world and in the life to come

.especially in the life to come, Allahomma Aameen

Yasin T. al-Jibouri

Rajab ۱۴۱۵/December ۱۹۹۴

Fast in History

Since the dawn of history, man did not find any means better than fast to ascend above yielding to his desires and worldly wishes, attain spiritual upliftment, return to spirituality, and renounce contemptible habits to which he became addicted and which led him to perdition. Divinely revealed creeds, non-Muslim societies and former nations have been familiar with the fast. Ancient Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Chinese and other nations knew and practiced fast for various reasons. Many still do even today. The Greeks came to know about fast and its merits from ancient Egyptians. .They used to fast immediately before engaging in a war

The Romans emulated the Greeks not only in mythology, but also in observing the fast, especially when they were attacked, in order to gain victory. They believed that fast strengthened them and taught them patience and perseverance, two prerequisites required to win the battle against internal temptations and external dangers. Ancient Chinese, too, incorporated fast into their doctrines and prescribed it .for those who were passing through periods of trials and tribulations

For centuries, Hindus and Buddhists have been observing a somehow more rigid form of fast. Jews and Christians observe certain types of fast. Moses, peace be upon him, observed the fast for forty days at Mount Sinai; see Exodus ۲۴:۱۸. During that period, .he was granted the heavy responsibilities embedded in the Ten Commandments

He was commanded in the Torah to fast the

tenth day of the seventh month and the ninth of the eighth. Jews used to (and some still do) fast during times of grief and mourning and when exposed to danger. They were also accustomed to fast one day as an act of atonement and whenever they believed that God was angry with them.

Nowadays, they fast one week to commemorate the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar II (۶۰۵-۵۶۲ B.C.) son of Nabopolassar, founder of the Chaldean or Neo-Babylonian empire, on March ۱۶, ۵۹۷ B.C. They observe fast on other days, too.

Jesus of Nazareth (۶ B.C.-۳۰ A.D.), peace be upon him and his virgin mother Mary daughter of Imran (Amram), was reported to have observed the fast on the day of atonement. He and his disciples fasted the forty days observed by Moses before him; see Matthew ۴:۲. This set the precedence for the pre-Easter fast among some Christians. Other Christian theologians started other types of fast during which they do not eat meat, fish, or eggs.

Name and Derivation

Allah Almighty has said,

"Surely the number of months with Allah is twelve in Allah's ordinance since the day He created the heavens and the earth, of these four are sacred; that is the right reckoning; therefore, do not be unjust to your own selves regarding them (Holy Qur'an, Surah Tawbah ۹:۳۶)."

These are the lunar months upon the reckoning of which does a Muslim in the east of the earth or the west rely; chronologically arranged, they

:are as follows

,Muharram (١

,Safar (٢

,Rabi' I (٣

,Rabi' II (۴

,Jumada I (۵

,Jumada II (۶

,Rajab (٧

,Sha’ban (٨

,The month of Ramadhan (٩

,Shawwal (١٠

Thul-Qi'da, and (١١

.Thul-Hijja (١٢

According to astronomy, the lunar calendar cannot be less than ٢٩ days, nor can it be more than ٣٠. It may once be ٢٩ days and another ٣٠, and its average is ٢٩ days and ١٢ hours and five minutes. The beginning of each lunar month is recognized by the ,sighting of the new moon, the crescent. The Almighty says

They ask you concerning the new moons. Say: They are times appointed for the" .(benefit of men, and for the pilgrimage" (Holy Qur'an, Surah Baqarah٢:١٨٩

In this verse, the Almighty has explained to us how to calculate and determine time by mentioning the word ahilla, which is the plural of the Arabic singular hilal, crescent, when it becomes visible to the naked eye. These crescents set the time for people and .help them determine when the pilgrimage is to be performed

Fast of the Month of Ramadhan

The lunar calendar of Islam brings the fast of the month of Ramadhan eleven days earlier every year. Thus, in a cycle of about thirty-three years, it passes through all the seasons successively. Fast was first prescribed on the second of Sha'ban in the second year of Hijrah (the migration of Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and his progeny, from Mecca to Medina, corresponding to ۶۲۲ A.D.).

On p. ۵۹, of al-Saduq's Amali (or Majalis), the faqih mentor and author quotes

Ja'far ibn Ali ibn al-Hassan ibn Ali ibn Abdullah ibn al-Mughirah al-Kufi as saying that his grandfather al-Hassan ibn Ali quotes his grandfather Abdullah ibn al-Mughirah quoting Isma'eel ibn Abu Ziyad quoting Abu Abdullah Imam Ja'far ibn Muhammad al-Sadiq (as) citing his forefathers, peace be upon all of them, saying that the Messenger of Allah (S)(١) once asked his companions, "Shall I tell you about something which, if you do it, will distance you from Satan as much as the distance between the east and the west?"

They said, "O yes! Please do so," whereupon he (S) said, "It is fast. It darkens his [Satan's] face, while charity breaks his back and the love for Allah's sake and assisting others in doing good deeds cut off his tail and seeking Allah's forgiveness splits his spine. For everything there is a zakat (purification), and the zakat of the bodies is fast."

Because the reader will come across the name of Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as)(٢) quite often in this book, we ought to stop here for a moment to introduce this great personality to those who may not be familiar with him. Needless to say, the Imam (as) is very well known to Muslims following the Shi'a Ja'fari Ithna-'Asheri School of Muslim Law; after all, they derive their fiqh from him and regard him as highly as, say, Hanafis regard Imam Abu Haneefah al-Nu'man, or as the Hanbalis regard Imam Ahmed ibn Hanbal. But those who are not Shi'as are justified in wondering

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١- This acronym stands for "peace be upon him and his family."

٢- Acronyms for Alahis-Salam, peace be upon him.

how Imam al-Sadiq (as) knew the forthcoming information; so, let us introduce them :to one of the most knowledgeable men who ever lived on earth

His full name is Abu Abdullah Ja'far ibn Imam Muhammad al-Baqir ibn Imam Ali al-Azgher Zaynul-'Abidin ibn Imam Husayn ibn Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib, of the clan of Banu Hashim, of the tribe of Quraysh, peace and blessings of Allah be upon all of them and many, many salutations. He was born in the sacred precincts of Medina on the ١٧th of Rabee' al-Awwal of ٨٣ A.H., and he died at the age of ۶۵ after being poisoned by the Abbaside caliph Abu Ja'far al-Mansur and was buried at Baqee', Medina. His mother was a relative of the first caliph Abu Bakr: she was Umm Farwa Fatima daughter of Abdel-Rahman son of Abu Bakr. His father was Abu Ja'far Imam .(Muhammad ibn Ali al-Baqir (as) (۵۷ - ۱۱۴ A.H.), grandson of Imam Husayn (as

If you wish to realize the greatness of Imam al-Sadiq (as), you will see his praise not only by Sunnis but also by non-Muslims as well, especially since his contributions to his contemporary intellectual revolution were invaluable and quite diverse. Not only was he a theologian, he was also a mathematician, a botanist, and alchemist, a scientist, .and a man of letters

To quote what Shi'as say about him may be out of place here. Probably the best compliment the Imam (as) received was from one of his world famous

students: Imam Abu Haneefah al-Nu’man, founder of the major Sunni sect, the Hanafis, who was one of tens of thousands of scholars who prided himself in being Abu Abdullah's students. Abu Haneefah said verbatim: "Lawlal sanatan, la halaka al-Nu’man," which means, "Had it not been for those couple of years, al-Nu’man would have perished," a reference to two years which he spent in Baghdad as a student of .Imam al-Sadiq (as) during al-Mansur's caliphate

In his Musnad Abu Haneefah, Abul-Qasim al-Baghghar quotes al-Hasan ibn Ziyad as saying, "Abu Haneefah was asked once in my presence, ‘Who is the most outstanding faqih you have ever seen?' and he answered by saying, ‘Ja’far ibn Muhammad. When-al-Mansur brought him [from Medina to Baghdad], he sent for me and said, ‘O Abu Haneefah! People are enchanted by Ja’far ibn Muhammad, so you should prepare some of your most difficult questions for him.' I prepared forty questions for him, then his [al-Sadiq's] father was brought from Heera. I visited him, greeted him, and sat at .his place of meeting

Then he turned to him and said, ‘O Abu Abdullah! This is Abu Haneefah.' 'Yes, I know him,' he responded. Then he turned to me and said, ‘Ask Abu Abdullah some of your questions,' so I kept asking him, and he answered all my questions, telling me our answers to them as well as those of the people of Medina..., till I finished asking him all the forty questions which I had prepared. He fully answered

all of them.'" Then Abu Haneefah said, "Is not one who best knows people's different "?views the most knowledgeable among them

Where did Imam al-Sadiq (as) get his knowledge from? Let us answer this question not from the Shi'a but from the Sunni viewpoint in order to satisfy the curiosity of, and perhaps convince, some skeptical readers of this book. On p. ۲۲۱, Vol. ۲, of the original Arabic text of al-Bukhari's Sahih, the author makes a reference to one particular saheefa, a parchment type scroll, which was being written by Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) during the revelation of the Holy Qur'an, I.e., during more than two decades, reaching in the end a total length of seventy yards. As he was writing it, Imam Ali (as) used to tie its pieces, one at a time, to his sword's scabbard as a protective measure. .This signifies how much he esteemed it

It consisted of ahadith of the Holy Prophet (S), be they his own or those which he narrated about the Almighty and which he learned from archangel Gabriel (as), I.e. Qudsi ahadith. Al-Bukhari on the said page quotes al-A'mash quoting Ibrahim al-Tameemi quoting his father quoting Imam Ali (as) as saying that all they (Ali and his ".(family) had were "The Book of Allah and this saheefa from the Prophet (S

On p. ۳۶, Vol. ۱, of al-Bukhari's Sahih, the author quotes al-Sha'bi] quoting Abu Juhayfa asking Ali (as), "Do you have any book?" Ali (as) said, "The Book

of Allah, (what we have learned from) some knowledge bestowed upon a Muslim, and this saheefa." "What is written in this saheefa?" asked Abu Juhayfa. Ali (as) said, "It contains reason, [injunctions such as] the freeing of captives, and that no Muslim ".should kill another Muslim

On p. ١۴٣ of Basair al-Darajat, Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) is quoted as saying, "We have the saheefa; it is dictated by the Messenger of Allah (S) and hand-written by Ali (as); nothing permissible or prohibitive except that it is recorded in it, and nothing people need, nor any issue, except that it contains it, even the penalty for slightly scratching one's cheek." Other references to this saheefa exist on pages ۶٧ and ۶٩, Vol. ۴, and on p. ١۴۴, Vol. ٨, of al-Bukhari's Sahih, as well as on p. ١١۵, Vol. ۴, of Muslim's Sahih. Another name for this saheefa is al-jami'a, the book which includes or contains all .knowledge

In Arabic, a university is call jami'a, a place where knowledge and those who learn it gather, a gathering place of knowledge and scholarship. If you are fortunate enough to be in possession of a copy of Usool al-Kafi by Muhammad ibn Ya'qub al-Kulayni published in ١٩٩٠ by Dar al-Ta'aruf of Beirut, Lebanon, read pp. ٢٩۴-٢٩٨ of its first volume to learn numarous details about not only this saheefa but also about Fatima's Mushaf, the copy of the Holy Qur'an kept by Fatima (as) daughter of the Messenger of Allah (S) many years

before Othman ibn ‘Affan asked Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) to help compile the text of .the Holy Qur'an

There are other references to this "university of knowledge," but we think this much suffices to let the reader know that the section of this book dealing with the rewards one receives from reciting a particular chapter of the Holy Qur'an is derived from one .of the most ancient, if not the very most ancient, books written in the history of Islam

Fast of the month of Ramadhan is the fourth pillar of Islam. The Arabic word shahr is used for a month due to its being mushtahir, well-known or famous, that is, the knowledge thereof reaches all people, as we are told by Imam Ibn Manzour, author of .Lisan al-Arab on p. ۴۳۲, Vol. ۴. Such knowledge can be attained by sighting its crescent

As to the reason why it has been called the month of Ramadhan, it is due to the fact that the Arabs gave the names of the months according to the times during which they occurred, and to the fact that it so happened that the month of Ramadhan coincided with the parching days of the summer. Its root word ramd, as the same author tells us on pp. ۱۶۰-۱۶۱, Vol. ۷, of the same lexicon, means to burn due to excessive sun-heat reflected on the desert sands. The ramda is the burning rock. This .is why it was called the month of Ramadhan

One may

say in Arabic that a man's feet were burnt due to the heat, so he became ramad. It is also said that it was called the month of Ramadhan because people become ramad due to their suffering from the combination of hunger and thirst during a very hot month. Arab linguists say that to make something armad is to squeeze it between two soft rocks then to pound it. A person fasting, by analogy, pounds his own nature .between two rocks: hunger and thirst

According to one of his nUmarous traditions, Prophet Muhammad (S) is quoted saying, "The month of Ramadhan was named so because it tends to ramad the sins, that is, burn them." The righteous at the dawn of Islam used to call it al-midmar, meaning that it emaciates the souls and bodies and helps them get rid of the excesses of evils and sins whereby the souls and bodies were laden. During the life-time of the Prophet (S), the blessed month of Ramadhan used to be called al-marzooq, the one full of sustenance, due to the abundance of the blessings of Allah whereby His servants are .sustained during it

In a letter he sent to Jarrah al-Madayini, Muhammad ibn Ya'qub cites Imam Abu Abdullah al-Sadiq (as) saying, "Fast is not only to abstain from eating and drinking." Then the Imam (as) quoted Mary (as) mother of Christ (as), as the Holy Qur'an tells us, (saying that she had vowed a fast for the Most Merciful One. The Imam (as

continued to say, "When you fast, you should safeguard your tongues, lower your gaze, and you should neither dispute with nor envy one another." This is recorded on p. ۳۵۱, Vol. ۹۴, of Bihar al-Anwar.

The Imam (as) is also quoted in the same and following page of the said reference saying, "When you fast, let your hearing and vision abstain with you from anything unlawful, against everything ugly, and leave hypocrisy aside, and do not harm those who serve you. Rather, adorn yourself with the dignity of the fast, and do not make your fasting day any different from the day when you do not fast."

The Niyyat (Intention) to Fast

When the crescent is sighted in your area or country, a niyyat, that is, a silent declaration of intention should be made to fast during this sacred month to attain nearness to Allah (wajib qurbatan ila-Allah). Just like the five daily prayers, the niyyat of fast is obligatory and mental, and so is the case of every deed according to Islam.

Significance of the Month of Ramadhan and its Fast

On p. ۶۴, Vol. ۲, of Safeenat al-Bihar, the Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that Allah Almighty has charged a group of His angels with the task of supplicating for those who observe the fast. On the same page of the same reference, Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying that if a person fasts during a hot day, and he suffers from thirst, Allah will assign a thousand angels to wipe his face and convey to him

glad tidings, and when he breaks his fast, Allah, the most Exalted, the most Glorified, addresses him with these words, "How sweet your smell and soul are! O My angels! ".Bear witness that I have forgiven him

On page ٩۶ of Thawab al-A’mal wa ‘Iqab al-A’mal, and also on page ۴٨ of his book Al-Amali (or pp. ٢٩-٣٢ of old editions), Shaikh Abu Ja’far Muhammad ibn Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn Babawayh al-Qummi al-Saduq (٣٠۶-٣٨١ A.H.) quotes Muhammad Ibn Ibrahim al-Ma'athi saying that Ahmed ibn Jaylawayh al-Jurjani al-Muthakkar] quotes Abu Ishaq Ibrahim ibn Bilal quoting Abu Muhammad quoting Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Kiram quoting Ahmed ibn Abdullah quoting Sufyan ibn ‘Ayeenah quoting Mu’awiya ibn Abu Ishaq quoting Sa'eed ibn Jubayr saying, "I asked Ibn Abbas once about the reward of .one who fasts during the month of Ramadhan knowing its greatness

He said: ‘O Ibn Jubayr! Get ready to listen to what your ears have never heard before, nor your heart has ever experienced, nor your soul has ever reckoned regarding that about which you have inquired! What you are seeking is the knowledge of the first generations and the last!' So I left him and prepared myself to meet him again. I .returned to him at early daybreak

Having said the fajr prayers (together), I reminded him of the tradition which I had sought, so he turned his face to me and said, ‘Listen carefully to what I am going to tell you. I have heard the Messenger of Allah

S) saying: 'Had you ever come to know about your rewards during the month of) Ramadhan, you would surely have thanked the Almighty a great deal more (than you usually do). When the first night is over, Allah, the Almighty and the Exalted One, forgives the sins committed by all members of my nation, the ones committed in secrecy and the ones committed in public, and He elevates your status two thousand .degrees and builds you fifty towns in Paradise

On the next day, He rewards you for every step you take during that day with the rewards of one who adored Him for a full year and the reward of one of His prophets, and He will reward you as though you had performed the fast for a full year. On the third day, the Exalted and Dear One grants you a dome in Paradise for each hair on your body, a dome of a white pearl on top of which are twelve thousand light houses and at the bottom of which are twelve thousand houses in each one of which there are one thousand beds and on each bed of which there is a nymph (huri) with large lovely eyes, each served by one thousand servants the head-covering of each one of ,them is better than this world and everything in it. On the fifth day

He builds you in Paradise a million(۱) cities in each one of which there are seventy thousand houses, inside each one of

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۱ - In Arabic, the word "million" does not exist; instead, Arabs use "a thousand ".thousands

which there are seventy thousand tables, and on each table there are seventy thousand bowls, and in each bowl there are sixty thousand types of food each one of which is different from the other. On the sixth day, He will grant you in the Abode of Peace a hundred thousand towns in each one of which there are a hundred thousand rooms, in each room there are a hundred thousand beds of gold the length of each is a thousand yards, and on each bed is a huri wife with large lovely eyes whose hair has thirty thousand locks braided with pearls and sapphires, and each lock is carried by a .hundred concubines

On the seventh day, the Almighty grants you in the Garden of Bliss the rewards of forty thousand martyrs and forty thousand siddeeqs. On the eighth day, Allah Almighty grants you the rewards of the good deeds of sixty thousand worshippers and sixty thousand ascetics. On the ninth day, Allah, the Exalted One, gives you what is equal to what He gives a thousand scholars and a thousand devotees and a .thousand warriors fighting for Allah in a foreign land

On the tenth day, He gives you the fulfillment of seventy thousand of your worldly wishes and orders the sun, the moon, the stars, the animals, the birds, the beasts, every rock and every rain-drop, everything wet and everything dry, all fish in the .oceans and all leaves on the trees, to pray for your forgiveness

On the eleventh day, the Exalted and Mighty One grants you the rewards whereby He rewards one who performs the pilgrimage and ‘umra four times and one who performs the pilgrimage with His prophets and the ‘umra with every siddeeq or martyr. On the twelfth day, He takes upon Himself to replace your sins with good deeds, then He multiplies your good deeds many times and gives you the rewards of .each of your good deeds a million times

On the thirteenth day, Allah Almighty grants you what He grants the devotees of Mecca and Medina and bestows upon you an intercession for each and every stone and rain-drop between Mecca and Medina. On the fourteenth day, He treats you as though you had met and followed in the footsteps of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David and Solomon [peace be upon all of them], and as though you had worshipped .the Almighty Allah in the company of His prophets for two hundred years

On the fifteenth day, He fulfills ten of your worldly wishes and those of the hereafter and grants you what He granted Job (as), then He orders the angels who bear the ‘Arsh to pray for your forgiveness and grants you on the Day of Resurrection forty lights: ten on your right, ten on your left, ten before you and ten behind you. On the sixteenth day, the Almighty grants you sixty outfits to wear as soon as you abandon ,your grave and a she-camel to ride

.and He will send a cloud to overshadow you to protect you from the heat of that Day

On the seventeenth day, the Almighty Allah says: 'I have forgiven them and their parents and exempted them from having to undergo the hardships of the Day of Resurrection.' On the eighteenth day, the Praised and Exalted One orders Gabriel, Michael and Israfil as well as the angels who bear the 'Arsh and all archangels to seek forgiveness for the nation of Muhammad (S) till the next year, and He will also grant you on the Day of Resurrection whatever rewards [He grants to those who .[participated in the Battle of Badr

On the nineteenth day, all angels in the heavens and on earth will have already sought permission of their Lord to visit your graves and to bring you every day a present and .[a drink [as long as you remain in the barzakh

So, if you complete your fast for twenty full days, the Almighty Allah sends you seventy thousand angels to protect you from every accursed devil, and He will have granted you for each day of your fast your rewards as though you fasted a hundred years, and He will set a ditch between you and hell and grant you the rewards of all those who recited the Torah, the Gospel, the Psalms and the Holy Qur'an, and will write for you for each feather on Gabriel the reward of a full year and will grant you the

rewards of those who glorify Him at the ‘Arsh and Kursi and will marry you to a .thousand nymphs for each of the verses of the Qur'an

On the twenty-first day, the Almighty expands your grave a thousand parasangs and lifts the darkness and loneliness of your graves and makes your graves look like the graves of the martyrs and your faces like the face of Joseph son of Jacob (as). On the twenty-second day, the Almighty dispatches the angel of death as He dispatches him to His prophets to remove your worldly worries and the torment of the hereafter. On the twenty-third day, you will pass on the Straight Path in the company of the prophets, the first to follow the prophets, and the martyrs, as if you had fed each .orphan and clothed everyone who needed to be clothed

On the twenty-fourth day, you will not leave this life before each one of you sees the place reserved for him/her in Paradise and is given the rewards of a thousand sick and a thousand who go back to their creed and will grant you the rewards of one who .(freed a thousand captives from the descendants of Ishmael (as

On the twenty-fifth day, Allah will have built you under His ‘Arsh a thousand green domes on top of each one of which is a tent of light. The Almighty and Exalted One will !then say: ‘O followers of Muhammad! I am your Lord and you are My servants

Enjoy the shade of My ‘Arsh in these domes and eat and drink with enjoyment, for .there will be no fear on you, nor will you grieve

O nation of Muhammad! By My Dignity and Greatness! I shall dispatch you to Paradise in a way which will amaze the first generations and the last, and I shall crown each one of you with a thousand light crowns, and I shall provide for each one of you a she-camel whose reins are made of light, and in it are a thousand gold rings, in each is an angel looking after it, in the hand of each angel is a light rod so that he may enter '.Paradise without a reckoning

And on the twenty-sixth day, Allah will look at you with compassion and will forgive all your sins except those of shedding innocent blood or robbing people's wealth, and He will grant you every day a thousand barriers against backbiting, lying and slandering. On the twenty-seventh day, He will consider you as though you had aided every believing man and woman and clothed seventy thousand naked persons and equipped a thousand soldiers to camp in a foreign land to defend Islam, and as if you .have recited every book Allah has revealed to His prophets

On the twenty-eighth day, Allah will have built you in Paradise a hundred thousand light cities and granted you in the garden of bliss a hundred thousand silver mansions and a hundred thousand cities in each

one of which there are a thousand rooms, and granted you in the garden of greatness a hundred thousand pulpits of musk inside each one of which there is a thousand saffron houses in each one of which there are a thousand beds of pearls and .sapphires and on each bed a wife of the huris with large lovely eyes

So if you complete your fast till the twenty-ninth day, the Almighty Allah will grant you a million quarters, inside each quarter is a white dome underneath which is a white camphor bed on which there are a thousand mattresses of green silk on each one of which there is a huri decorated with seventy thousand ornaments and crowned with .eighty thousand locks each one of which is decorated with diamonds and sapphires

So if you finish thirty complete days of fast, the Almighty will have granted you for each day the rewards of a thousand martyrs and a thousand foremost believers in His Prophets, and He will have assigned for you the rewards of fifty years of adoration, and He will have decreed a clearance for you from hell and a passage on the Straight .Path and a security against the torment

One of the gates of Paradise is called al-Rayyan, and it shall never be opened before the Day of Resurrection. It will be opened for those among the nation of Muhammad (S) who performed the fast. Ridwan, custodian of Paradise, will call out saying: 'O followers of

Muhammad! Come to the al-Rayyan gate!' So he will let my nation enter Paradise through that gate. Therefore, if one is not forgiven during the month of Ramadhan, in which month can he be forgiven? There is neither will nor strength except from Allah; Allah suffices us, and what a great Helper He is!'" This lengthy tradition is also .recorded on pp. ١٨٣-١٨٥, Vol. ٨, of Bihar al-Anwar

On page ٩٢ of his book Thawab al-A'mal wa 'Iqab al A'mal, in a chapter dealing with the glory of the month of Ramadhan and the rewards for its fast, Shaikh Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn Babawayh al-Qummi al-Saduq relies on the authority of Jabir who quotes Imam Abu Ja'far al-Baqir, peace be upon him, and also in Al-Misbah, where Jabir ibn Yazid quotes Imam Abu Ja'far, peace be upon him, saying the following to Jabir ibn Abdullah al-Ansari, one of the greatest sahabah ,((companions of the Holy Prophet, S

O Jabir! This is the month of Ramadhan; whoever fasts during its day, and spends a" portion of its night saying prayers and abstaining from eating anything unlawful, safeguarding his modesty against anything unlawful, and withholding his tongue against saying anything unlawful, will leave his sins behind him as the month leaves." Jabir said, "O Messenger of Allah! What a beautiful hadith this is!" The Messenger of "!Allah (S) whereupon said, "And what difficult terms these are

The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, his progeny and companions, is

also quoted saying, "Whoever fasts during the month of Ramadhan out of firm belief and a sincere desire to please Allah will have all his past and future sins forgiven." He (S) is also quoted saying, "The gates of Paradise are opened on the first night of the month of Ramadhan, and they remain open till the last night of it." He (S) is also quoted saying that the Almighty has entrusted seven angels to keep each demon .fettered till the end of the month of Ramadhan

On the same page of the same reference, Muhammad ibn al-Hassan is quoted saying that al-Husayn ibn al-Hassan ibn Sa'eed has quoted al-Husayn ibn 'Alwan quoting 'Amr ibn Shimr citing Jabir who in turn cites Imam Abu Ja'far al-Baqir (as) saying that whenever the month of Ramadhan approached, the Messenger of Allah (S) used to :come out to the public, face the Qibla and supplicate thus

O Allah! I invoke You to let this crescent be the harbinger of security and conviction, safety and peace, crowned health, vast sustenance, prevention against all ailments, recitation of the Holy Qur'an, and help in performing the prayers and upholding the fast! O Lord! Safeguard us for the month of Ramadhan, safeguard it for us, and !safeguard it from us till the month is over and You have forgiven us

:Then he (S) would face the public and address them thus

O Muslim multitudes! When the crescent of the month of Ramadhan appears, the demons among the devils are chained, and

the gates of the heavens and Paradise are opened, and so are the gates of His Mercy, while the gates of hell are closed. Pleas are answered and the Almighty releases at the time of iftar a number of residents of hell. In every night, a caller calls: 'Is there anyone who has a plea? Is there anyone who seeks forgiveness? O Almighty Allah! Reward everyone who spends in Your way, and grant perdition to everyone who withholds. And when the month of Shawwal approaches, the believers are called upon .to receive their rewards, for that will be their day to receive their rewards

On page ٩۴ of the reference cited above, Muhammad ibn Musa ibn al-Mutawakkil is quoted saying that Abdullah ibn Ja'far al-Himyari has said that Ahmed ibn Muhammad ibn Eisa has said that al-Hassan ibn Mahboob al-Zarrad has said that Abu Ayyub has quoted Abul-Ward citing Imam Abu Ja'far al-Baqir, peace be upon him, saying that the Messenger of Allah (S) delivered a sermon on the last Friday of the month of .Sha'ban

In it, he praised Allah then said, 'O people! You have been shadowed by a month one night of which is better than a thousand months; it is the month of Ramadhan during which Allah has enjoined you to fast and equalled the rewards for voluntary prayers during its nights with the rewards due to those who volunteered to say optional .prayers for seventy years in other months

He also equalled the rewards of the

good deeds of those who do good deeds during it with those who perform one of the obligations enjoined by the Almighty (in other months). And whoever performs one of the enjoined obligations during it will be rewarded as though he had performed seventy other obligations in other months. It is the month of perseverance, and the .reward of perseverance is Paradise

It is the month of consolation, the one wherein Allah increases the sustenance of the believers... Allah will decrease the hardship of the reckoning of whoever decreases the hardship of his slave during it. It is a month the beginning of which is mercy, the middle of which is forgiveness, and the end of which is acceptance and emancipation from the fire. You cannot by any means take lightly during it four merits with two of .which you please Allah, and two others you cannot do without

The two merits whereby you please Allah are: you testify that There is no god except Allah and that I, Muhammad, is the Messenger of Allah; as for the two merits which you cannot do without, these are: you plead to Allah to fulfill your worldly needs and grant you Paradise, and that you plead to Allah during it for your health and well-being, and you seek refuge with Him against the fire."'.

On pp. ۵۶-۵۷ of al-Saduq's Amali, Sa'd ibn Abdullah is quoted saying that Ahmed ibn Muhammad ibn Eisa ibn Sa'eed quotes Fadal citing Yousuf ibn 'Umayrah quoting 'Ubaydullah ibn

Abdullah quoting individuals who heard Abu Ja’far, peace be upon him, saying that when the month of Ramadhan was about to approach, that is, on the twenty-seventh of Sha’ban, the Messenger of Allah (S) told Bilal to call upon people to assemble. ,People assembled, so he (S) ascended the pulpit, praised the Almighty then said

O people! The month (of Ramadhan) has approached, and it is the master of all" months wherein one night is better than a thousand months. During it, the gates of hell are closed and those of Paradise are kept open. Whoever lives through it and is not forgiven will be distanced from the mercy of Allah, and whoever during it does not receive Allah's forgiveness while his parents are living will surely be further away from receiving Allah's mercy. And whoever hears my name and fails to send blessings unto ".me will (likewise) be distanced from Allah's mercy

A Few Benefits of the Fast

In Islam, the spiritual, social, economic, political and psychological benefits of fast are interrelated, each affecting the other. Rituals regulate the Muslims' social and individual life and bring them closer to their Creator. A combination of fast, prayers, and meditation may be the very best dose for any and all psychological, financial, and .spiritual ills from which one may be suffering

They purify the soul, cleanse the intention, and bring about an abundance of good from the Almighty Who is ever-watching over us and Who desires nothing but good .for His sincere servants

,On p. ۳۵۳

p: ۳۴

Vol. ۹۴, of Bihar al-Anwar, al-Majlisi traces a saying of Imam Muhammad al-Jawad (as) saying that if one fasts at the beginning of a month, reciting in the first rek'at the Fatiha once and al-Ikhlas thirty times (I.e., as many as the maximum days of the lunar month), and the Fatiha once and al-Qadr thirty times in the second rek'at, following that with offering the poor something by way of charity, it will dispel everything about .which he is apprehensive during the entire month

Two other rek'ats are described in the same reference as having even a greater effect on a believer's life: Imam al-Jawad (as) is quoted saying, "Whoever offers two optional rek'ats at the very beginning of the month of Ramadhan, reciting in the first the Fatiha and the Fath, and in the other whatever surah (Qur'anic chapter) he likes, Allah, the most Exalted One, will not let him suffer anything bad during his entire year, ".and he will remain thus protected till the next year

During the month of Ramadhan, the believers learn to curb their desires and check them against transgression, extravagance, and the yielding to the lower desires, all of which degenerate man and bring him to the pit of self-destruction and annihilation. Fast fosters a strong will, teaches patience and self-discipline, the ability to bear hardship and tolerate hunger and thirst. In short, it brings about a clear victory over .one's illicit desires and selfish impulses

It regulates and systemizes the energies of instincts. It

trains the body to submit to lofty spiritual impulses. It safeguards the body's health by protecting it against extravagance. It grants its organs a respite so that they may be ready to resume their activities. As medical science has proved, it is a medicine for .many bodily and nervous ailments

It is a moral education, a nourishment of supreme virtues. It teaches the believer to abandon vices, to control emotions and instincts, to curb the tongue against saying what is wrong or inappropriate and the conscience against contemplating upon wrongdoing or subversion. It promotes the spirit of unity among members of the fasting community; it teaches them humility and humbleness and instills within them .the feeling of equality before Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala

The rich have to observe it as well as the poor, the women as well as the men, the influential and powerful as well as the weak and downtrodden: they all have to observe the fast. It promotes the spirit of charity and compassion towards the poor and the needy, and it reminds each believer of the needs of other believers. Muslims .share with each other Allah's blessings unto them

The believers strengthen their ties with the Almighty, since they express through fast a continuous desire to obey His Will and carry out His commandments. They also strengthen their ties with one another, since the month of Ramadhan is the month of giving. It is the month for productive social inter-activity. Islam places a great deal of

.emphasis on moral excellence during this holy month

The holy Prophet of Islam (S) has said, "One who, while fasting, neither guards his tongue from telling lies nor refrains from doing bad deeds does not respect his fast, while Allah does not approve of mere abstention from food… When you fast, you should not speak ill of anybody, nor should you be boisterous or noisy. If anybody speaks ill of you or tries to pick a quarrel with you, do not respond to him in the same ".manner; rather, simply tell him that you are fasting

The institute of the fast is one of the signs of the Almighty's mercy on those who adhere to His divine creed, and it is never meant to put a hardship on anybody. The Almighty does not gain any benefit from putting hardship on anyone; on the contrary, He always tries to pave the way of happiness for His servants in this life and the life to come, and sometimes He even "pushes" them to do what is good for them, as is the case with making the fast of the month of Ramadhan obligatory on every believing .man and woman

But if you afford this great month a sincere and profound welcome, you will receive your rewards in many, many ways both in the short life of this fleeting world and in the eternal abode, Insha-Allah. Page ۸۳, Vol. ۱, of the first edition of al-Kulayni's Al-Kafi, as al-Majlisi tells us on p. ۳۵۴,

Vol. ٩۴, of his own Bihar al-Anwar, citing his own father quoting his mentor Shaykh the renowned faqih Ali ibn Muhammad al-Madayni quoting Sa'eed ibn Hibatullah al-Rawandi quoting Ali ibn Abdel-Samad al-Naisapuri quoting al-Dooryasti quoting Shaykh al-Mufid saying that on the first day of the month of Ramadhan, one ought to :supplicate thus

Lord! The month of Ramadhan has arrived, and You have required us to fast during it and revealed the Qur'an as guidance to people and a clear distinction of the guidance and the right criteria. O Lord! Help us observe its fast; accept the same from us; receive our fast from and safeguard the same for us in an ease from You and good .health; surely You can do everything

What Breaks the Fast

Any of the following invalidates the fast: eating or drinking, sexual intercourse, telling lies about Allah and/or His Messenger (S), immersing the entire head in water, deliberate inhalation of smoke, remaining in the state of janabah (uncleanliness due to seminal discharge) till dawn, masturbating, taking injections whereby nourishing liquids reach the stomach, deliberate vomiting, intentionally passing an object through the throat or any other natural opening... Travelling, that is, going from your place of residence to a place situated at least eight farasikh (about twenty-seven and a half miles, or fifty miles according to some scholars) requires you to break your fast .and to make up for it later on in equal number of days missed

Deliberately breaking the fast requires a kaffara (atonement) which is either

the feeding of sixty poor persons, or fasting for sixty consecutive days for each day missed. If the fast is broken accidentally, qaza (making up) suffices. Every adult and mentally sound male or female Muslim is required to fast starting twenty minutes .before dawn and till sunset

Al-Majlisi, on p. ٣٥٢, Vol. ٩۴, of his Bihar al-Anwar, cites a number of Shi'a scholars saying that they heard Imam Abu Ja'far al-Baqir (as) saying, "Telling lies breaks the fast, and so does a second look at another woman, in addition to oppression, be it little ".or much

One who misses fasting a number of days during the month of Ramadhan due to travelling, forgetfulness, ignorance of the fact that those days were the days of the month of Ramadhan, sickness, menstruation or childbirth, are required to make up in equal number of days missed. Those who suffered from temporary insanity or who faint before having the chance to make the intention to fast, those who are afflicted with an ailment which causes them to be constantly thirsty and have no hope of healing, or because of old age that renders them feeble, do not have to make it up, .nor do they have to offer kaffara, atonement

One who falls sick during the month of Ramadhan and a year passes before being able to fully recover is, of course, not required to make up but to pay the compensation which is providing the needy and deserving poor, or providing one such ,person

with three quarters of a kilogram of food for each day missed. If one's father dies owing either prayers or fast, his oldest son is required to make up on his father's .behalf, but a son is not required to make up on behalf of his deceased mother

Fast is not accepted without the five daily prayers. Exempted from the fast are children, the mentally retarded, and old men and women who find it too hard to observe. If they can fast in other months to make up, it will be best for them. If they cannot make up, then they do not have to offer kaffara either. Women during their menstrual period are not only exempted from fasting, they are forbidden from fasting, but they will have to make it up later on. As soon as their period ends, they must take their ghusul (ceremonial bath) and resume the fast. Women breast-feeding their infants and whose natural milk is not sufficient, as well as women during their prenatal period may break their fast if it harms their infants. They, too, have to make .up for the fast

Do not say "Ramadhan" only

On p. ۲۳۲, Vol. ۷, of Wasail al-Shi'a, and also on p. ۶۹, Vol. ۴ (old edition), of Al-Kafi, Imam Abu Ja'far al-Baqir (as) is quoted saying, "Do not say 'this is Ramadhan,' or 'Ramadhan has gone,' or 'Ramadhan has approached,' for Ramadhan is one of the ;Names of Allah, the most Exalted, the most Great, and He neither comes nor goes

things that die come and go. Instead, you should say ‘the month of Ramadhan, for [in this case] the month will simply be identified, whereas the Name belongs to Allah, Exalted is His mention, whereas the month wherein the Qur'an was revealed is made ".by Allah a month for hopeful anticipation as well as of stern warnings

Al-Majlisi quotes the same in his Bihar al-Anwar, citing Ibn Babawayh al-Qummi's Thawab al-A’mal wa ‘Iqab al-A’mal. Imam al-Baqir (as) here is simply repeating what the Messenger of Allah (S) had said as quoted by Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib, peace be upon him, thus: "Do not say ‘Ramadhan,' for you do not know what Ramadhan really is; instead, you should say just as the Almighty Allah has said in His Glorious Book ‘the month of Ramadhan,' and whoever says ‘Ramadhan' [only], let him both pay sadaqa ((alms) and kaffara (atonement) so that his sin may be forgiven."(١)

History and Types of Fast

Imam al-Hasan ibn Ali ibn Abu Talib, peace be upon them, is quoted on p. ۴۹, Vol. ۲ of al-Saduq's book Man la Yahdaruhu al-Faqih saying that a group of Jews once visited the Messenger of Allah (S) and the most learned man among them asked him about several issues one of which was: "Why did the Almighty enjoin fast upon your nation during day-time for thirty days after having required previous nations to fast for a "?longer period of time

The Messenger of Allah (S) said: "When Adam ate of the

Al-Saduq, in his Connotations of the News, quoting Hisham ibn Salim. Also in Basaair -١ .al Darajat by Sa`d ibn Abdullah

forbidden fruit, food remained in his stomach for thirty days; therefore, Allah enjoined Adam's offspring to spend thirty days suffering from hunger and thirst, and what they eat during this period of time [during the night] is due only to His own favor upon them just as it was His favor upon Adam. This is why Allah enjoined my nation to fast." Then :the Messenger of Allah (S) recited this verse

Fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you" may guard (yourselves) against evil. (Fast) for a certain number of days" (Holy Qur'an, .(۲:۱۸۲

The Jew, therefore, said, "You have, O Muhammad, said the truth; so, what is the reward of one who fasts?" The Prophet (S) answered, "No believer fasts during the month of Ramadhan seeking nearness to Allah without the Almighty granting him :seven merits

;anything haram (prohibited) in his body will be compressed and extracted (۱

;he becomes closer to achieving the mercy of Allah (۲

;(he will have atoned the sin of his father Adam (as (۳

;his death agony will be reduced (۴

he will receive an assurance against undergoing the pain of hunger and thirst on the (۵ ;Day of Resurrection

Allah will grant him a clearance from hell; and (۶

Allah will feed him of the good things in Paradise." The Jew said, "O Muhammad! (۷ ".You have surely said the truth

This tradition has been recorded on page ۳۷۸, Chapter ۱۰۹, of al-Saduq's book

.'Ilal al-Sharai'

As regarding its types, these vary. They differ according to the differences among the creeds, sects, nations and their respective customs. Its objectives, too, vary, although the most significant of them and the most outstanding is to purify the body and the soul from material and non-material venoms. Among its types is one referred to by the Holy Qur'an as silence and abstention from any vain discourse.

An example is the address of the Almighty to Virgin Mary (as) in which He commanded her, when confronted by others who resented the birth of Christ (as), to say:

"I have surely vowed [to observe] a fast to the Beneficent God, so I shall not speak to anyone today" (Holy Qur'an, ۱۹:۲۶).

Muslims have learned from their Lord, the Praised and the Exalted One, that fast is one of the atonements for: ۱) shaving the head during the pilgrimage (while one is still wearing the ihram) due to a valid excuse such as sickness or a head injury, ۲) the inability to offer sacrifice (I.e., hadi), ۳) killing an ally by mistake, ۴) violating an oath, ۵) hunting while still wearing the ihram, ۶) in the case of zihar.(۱)

Forty Types of Fast

Although the above chapter dealt with the types of fast, we decided to expand this discussion and quote for you from "Bab al-Sawm," chapter dealing with fast, on pp. ۵۲-۵۴, Vol. ۲, of Man la Yahduruhu al-Faqih by the nation's mentor Shaikh Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn

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۱- "Your back," an Arab during Jahiliyya may say to his wife, "looks to me like the back of my mother!" Striking such a similitude is called zihar.

:Babawayh al-Qummi al-Saduq who indicates the following

Al-Zuhri (one of the companions of our fourth Imam Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn Ali ibn Abu Talib Zaynul-'Abidin al-Sajjad, peace be upon him and his posterity as well as progeny) is quoted saying, "Ali ibn al-Husayn, peace be upon them, asked me once, 'Where did you come from, O Zuhri?' I said, 'From the [Prophet's] mosque.' 'What were you discussing?' he asked me. 'We discussed the fast,' said I, 'and we all agreed '.that the only obligatory fast is the fast of the month of Ramadhan

He said to me, 'O Zuhri! It is not as you all say. Fast is of forty different types: ten are as obligatory as the fast of the month of Ramadhan; ten are prohibited; fourteen are optional: one may fast during them or he may not; add to that the three different kinds of conditional fast. Add also: disciplinary fast, permissible fast, and the fast making up for one who had to go on a journey or who fell sick.' Said I, 'May I be "'.sacrificed for your sake! Please explain them to me

:The Imam (as) stated the following

Obligatory fast includes the fast of the month of Ramadhan and of two consecutive" months for each one day deliberately missed of the month of Ramadhan, and the fast of two consecutive months as an atonement for zihar. Allah, the most Sublime, the ,most Exalted, says

As for) those of you who put away their wives by likening their backs)'

to the backs of their mothers, these are not their mothers; their mothers are no other than those who gave birth to them, and most surely they utter a hateful word and a falsehood, and most surely Allah is Pardoning, Forgiving. (As for) those who put away their wives by likening their backs to the backs of their mothers then recall what they said, they should free a captive before touching each other; to that you are admonished (to conform), and Allah is Aware of what you do. But whoever has no (such) means, let him fast for two months succesively before they touch each other' .((Holy Qur'an, Surah Mujadilla ۵۸-۲-۴

Another (such type of obligatory fast) is fasting two successive months if a Muslim kills another Muslim by mistake and is unable to free a slave; this is obligatory on account :of the verse saying

And whoever kills a believer by mistake should free a believing slave, and blood-' money should be paid to his people unless they remit it as alms; but if they be from a tribe hostile to you and he is a believer, the freeing of a believing slave (suffices), and if he is from a tribe between whom and you there is a covenant, the blood-money should be paid to his people along with the freeing of a believing slave; but if he cannot find (a slave), he should fast for two months successively: a penance from ,Allah, and Allah is Knowing, Wise' (Holy Qur'an

.(Surah Nisa ۴:۹۲

Another (such obligatory fast) is fasting three days as an act of atonement for breaking an oath if one is unale to feed the needy; Allah, the most Sublime, the most ,High, says

Allah does not call you to account for what is vain of your oaths, but He calls you to' account for making deliberate oaths; so, its expiation is the feeding of ten poor men out of the middling (food) whereby you feed your families, or their clothing, or the freeing of a slave; but whosoever cannot find (means), he, then, should fast for three days; this is the expiation of your oaths when you swear' (Holy Qur'an, Surah Maida .(۵:۸۹

.All types of such fast are consecutive, not a day now and a day then

And the fast on account of causing an injury to the head while shaving it while" performing the pilgrimage rites is also obligatory; Allah Almighty says, 'Whoever among you is sick or has an ailment of the head, he (should effect) a compensation by .(fasting or offering alms or sacrificing' (Holy Qur'an, Surah Baqarah ۲:۱۹۶

So he is given in this verse an option: if he chooses to fast, he should fast for three days. And the fast of one who cannot offer a sacrifice at the pilgrimage is also ,obligatory; Allah Almighty says

Whoever benefits by combining the visit with the pilgrimage (should take) what' (offering is easy (for him) to obtain; but he who cannot find (any offering

should fast for three days during the pilgrimage and for seen days when you return; .(these (make) ten (days) complete' (Holy Qur'an, Surah Baqarah ۲:۱۹۶

And the fast of one who hunts while still wearing the ihram is also obligatory; Allah, ,the most Exalted, the most Sublime, says

O you who believe! Do not kill game while you are on pilgrimage, and whoever among' you kills it intentionally, the compensation (for it) is the like of what he kills, from the cattle, as two just persons among you shall judge, as an offering to be brought to the Ka'ba or the expiation (of it) is the feeding of the poor or the equivalent of it in fasting so that he may taste the unwholesome result of his deed' (Holy Qur'an, Surah Maida ".(۵:۹۵

Then the Imam (as) turned to al-Zuhri and asked him, "Do you know how its equivalent is met by fasting, O Zuhri?" The latter said, "No, indeed, I do not know." Imam Zaynul-'Abidin (as) then said, "The game is first to be estimated, then the estimated value is to be measured by its equivalent in charity, then such a measure is .to be weighed, so he should fast one day for each half a measure unit

And the covenant (nathr) fast is obligatory, and so is the fast of I'tikaf. As regarding the prohibited fast, it is forbidden to fast on Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, the three days of tashreeq(۱), and the fast of doubt: Allah ordered us

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۱ - Tashreeq means the cutting and sun-drying of sacrificed meat. The three days referred to are the ones that follow Eid al-Adha, the Feast of Sacrifice, when sacrificial .meat is cut to pieces then naturally sun dried

to fast it with the month of Sha'ban and anyone among us is prohibited from singling himself out to fast when everyone else is not sure whether it is the inception of the ".month of Ramadhan or not

I said to him, "May I be sacrificed for you, but if he did not fast during the month of Sha'ban, what should he do?" The Imam (as) said, "He should make the intention on the uncertain night that he is fasting the month of Sha'ban; so, if it turns out to be the month of Ramadhan, he will receive his reward, but if it becomes evident that it was, ".indeed, the month of Sha'ban, he will not have committed any harm

I then asked him, "How can voluntary fast make up for a compulsory one?" He (as) said, "If someone voluntarily fasts one day during the month of Ramadhan without knowing that it is the month of Ramadhan, then he finds out that it was, should he fast again?! The obligation is regarding the day itself. The wisal fast(١) is prohibitive, and to .fast each day of your life is likewise prohibitive

As regarding optional fast, it is to fast on Fridays, Thursdays, and Mondays, the white" (beed) days (٢), the fast of six days during the month of Shawwal following the month of Ramadhan, the fast on the standing day at Arafat, and the day of Ashura; all these .occasions are optional; one may or may not fast during them

As

.To fast the wisal fast means to fast only the last day of each lunar month -١

The author of Lisan al-Arab tells us on p. ١٢۴, Vol. ٧, that these are the ١٣th, ١۴th and -٢ ١۵th days of the Islamic calendar month, adding, "They are called beed, white, ".because the moon shines during them

regarding the fast by permission, a woman cannot fast an optional fast without the permission of her husband; a slave may not observe an optional fast without the permission of his master; and a guest may not fast an optional fast except with the permission of his host; the Messenger of Allah (S) has said, 'Whoever visits some '.folks, he should not observe an optional fast except with their permission

As regarding disciplinary fast, a boy reaching adolescence is ordered to fast when he reaches the age of adulthood, though it is not obligatory on him to do so. Likewise, if one is forced due to a sudden ailment to break his fast at the inception of the day, then he gains his strength thereafter, he should fast the rest of the day as a self-.disciplinary act although he is not obligated to do so

Likewise, if a traveller eats at the beginning of the day then reaches home, he should abstain from eating the rest of the day as a self-disciplinary act and not as an obligation. As regarding the fast of one who forgets and eats or drinks, or if he does so only as a measure of taqiyya(۱), without doing so on purpose, Allah, the most Exalted, the most Great, has permitted him to do so and will reward him for it. As regarding the fast when travelling or suffering from an ailment, there is a great deal of difference of opinion in its regard. Some people

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۱- Taqiyya means to do something involuntarily in order to safeguard one's life, honor, or possession. It is a last resort when one feels seriously threatened and without, by .doing so, harming anyone else

.say that he should fast, whereas others say that he should not

As far as we (Ahl al-Bayt [as]) are concerned, we are of the view that one should break his fast during both cases; so, if he fasts during his trip, or when sick, he has to make it up because Allah, the most Exalted, the most Great, says, "And if one of you is sick or ".'(travelling, (the fast of) a number of other days (suffices

Optional Fast

point

Islam encourages the faithful to fast during other months. The author of Thawab al-A'mal traces the isnad of one tradition of the Holy Prophet (S) to Ibn 'Abbas who cites the Prophet (S) saying, "Whoever fasts three days during the month of Sha'ban will be elevated seventy thousand degrees in Paradise of jewels and diamonds, and whoever fasts nineteen days during the month of Sha'ban will be granted seventy thousand mansions of jewels and diamonds in Paradise. And whoever fasts twenty-two days of the month of Sha'ban will be clothed with seventy outfits of silk and silk ".brocades

How do the faithful earn mansions in Paradise and marry those lovely huris besides ?fasting

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted on p. ١٧٧, Vol. ٨, of Bihar al-Anwar saying, "When I entered Paradise during my ascension trip (israa), I saw angels building mansions, using one brick of gold and another of silver. From time to time they would stop. 'Why do you stop?' I asked them. 'We stop till we get

paid,' they answered. I asked them, ‘How do you get paid?' ‘We get paid,' they answered, ‘when the believer (for whom we are building this mansion) says: Subhan-Allah wal-Hamdu Lillah wa Allahu Akbar (Glory to Allah; all Praise is due to Allah, and "'.(Allah is Great

Types of optional fast are recorded and explained in detail in Vol. ۹۴ of al-Majlisi's Bihar al-Anwar; refer to this valuable reference for the number of pages, as well as the isnad, of the traditions cited in the following paragraphs which deal with other :types of fast

Fast of Eid al-Ghadir (۱

One who fasts during the ۱۸th of Thul-Hijjah will be regarded as though he had fasted sixty months. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) has quoted his forefathers (as) citing the Messenger of Allah (S) saying about Eid al-Ghadir, "The Day (Eid) of the Ghadir is the greatest of my nation's Eids; it is the Day on which Allah, the Most Exalted One, ordered me to nominate my brother Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) as the leader of my nation so that they may through him receive guidance after me, and it is the Day when Allah perfected the (Islamic) creed and completed the blessing upon my nation and accepted Islam as their religion." This tradition is also stated in al-Saduq's Amali. Abu Abdullah Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) is quoted on p. ۳۲, Vol. ۲, of Al-Khisal, as having said, "Eid al-Ghadir is the greatest Eid; it is the ۱۸th of Thul-Hijjah, and it was a ".Friday

.On p. ۱۲۶, Vol

of Al-Khisal, it is stated that Ibn Musa quotes al-Asdi citing al-Husayn ibn ‘Ubaydullah al-Ash’ari quoting al-Yaqtini quoting al-Qasim quoting his grandfather quoting al-Mufaddal saying, "I asked Abu Abdullah (as): ‘How many Eids do Muslims have?' He (as) said, ‘Four.' I said, ‘I know of two Eids (al-Fitr and al-Adha) and Friday...' He said to me, ‘The greatest and the most honored of all of them is the ١٨th of Thul-Hijjah, which is the day when the Messenger of Allah (S) installed the Commander of the Faithful (as) as the people's highest authority (after him).' I asked him, ‘What should we do on that Day?' He (as) said, ‘You ought to fast during it to thank and praise Allah, though He ought to be thanked all the time. The Prophets had required their wasis to fast on the day when the latter are nominated as their successors and to consider it as an Eid. Whoever fasts during it will be regarded as having done so in sixty years."

٢) Fast of Eid Miladun-Nabi (S)

Al-Karajki's Kanz indicates that anyone who fasts the ١٧th of Rabi’ al-Awwal, when the Prophet (S) was born, will be regarded as though he had fasted the whole year.

٣) Fasting the First Days of Thul-Hijjah

On pp. ١٢١-١٢٢, al-Majlisi, in Vol. ٩٤ of his Bihar al-Anwar, quotes Muhammad ibn Ibrahim quoting ‘Uthman ibn Hammad quoting-al-Hassan ibn Muhammad al-Daqqaq quoting Ishaq ibn Wahab quoting Mansur ibn al-Muhajir quoting Muhammd ibn al-’Ata quoting ‘Ayesha saying that a young man with a very beautiful voice used to fast as soon as the

crescent of Thul-Hijjah was sighted, so people raised this issue with the Messenger of Allah (S) who ordered him to be brought to him.

Having presented himself before the Prophet (S), he was asked by the Messenger of Allah (S), 'What makes you fast during these days?' The young man said, 'May both my father and mother be sacrificed for your sake, O Messenger of Allah! These are days to honor the places which Allah has decreed to be held as sacred, and these are the days for performing the pilgrimage; (I do so) in the hope that Allah will include me in the pilgrims' supplications.'

The Messenger of Allah (S) then said, 'In this case, for each of these days which you fast you shall receive rewards equivalent to setting one hundred slaves free in addition to sacrificing a hundred cattle for the Ka'ba, and providing a hundred horses to transport those who make jihad in defense of Islam. So when it is the Day of Tarwiyah (۱), you will receive rewards equivalent to setting one thousand slaves free in addition to sacrificing a thousand cattle for the Ka'ba and a thousand horses to transport those who make jihad in defense of Islam.

On the day of Arafat, you will receive rewards equivalent to setting two thousand slaves free in addition to sacrificing two thousand heads of cattle for the Ka'ba and two thousand horses to transport those who go on jihad to defend Islam, in addition to forgiveness

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۱- This is the ۸th of Thul-Hijjah, the day, as recorded on p. ۳۴۷, Vol. ۱۴, of the lexicon Lisan al-Arab by Ibn Manzour, when the pilgrims fill their water bags and prepare to go to Mina.

of the sins of sixty past years and sixty ones thereafter.'" This tradition is recorded on .p. ١٠١ of Thawab al-A'mal wa 'Iqab al-A'mal by Shaikh al-Qummi al-Saduq

Fasting the Day When the Earth was Expanded (۴

Verse ٣٠, Chapter ٧٩ (al-Nazi'at), reads, "And the earth He expanded thereafter." The Arabic word used with reference to the earth's expansion is daha. On p. ١٢٢, Vol. ٩۴, of Bihar al-Anwar, and also on p. ١٠١ of al-Saduq's Thawab al-A'mal, Ahmed ibn Idris quotes al-Ash'ari quoting Ahmed ibn al-Husayn quoting Abu Tahir ibn Hamza quoting al-Washsha' saying that he, then a young man, was once in the company of his father .when they ate supper with Imam al-Rida (as) on the ٢۵th of Thul-Qi'da

The Imam (as) told us that that night was the night during which Prophets Ibrahim and Jesus son of Mary, peace be upon them, were born, and also when the earth was expanded from underneath the Ka'ba, in addition to some other attribute relevant to it which I never heard from anyone else, adding, "Whoever fasts during its day will be ".regarded as though he had fasted for full sixty months

Fasting the Day of Arafat (۵

Three books make a reference to such fast: Bihar al-Anwar (p. ١٢٣, Vol. ٩۴), 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida (p. ٣۶, Vol. ٢), and 'Ilal al-Sharai' (p. ٧٣, Vol. ٢). These books cite a tradition narrated by Abu Abdullah Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) in which the Imam (as) says, "The Messenger of Allah (S) appointed only (Imam) Ali (as) as his successor, while (Imam) Ali (as) assigned Imamate to both

his sons) al-Hassan and al-Husayn (as). When al-Hassan (as) was the Imam, a man) entered on the day of Arafat and saw al-Hassan (as) eating his lunch while al-Husayn .(as) was fasting

The same man came to see al-Husayn (as) when he became the Imam following the death of (Imam) al-Hassan (as), also on the Arafat day, and he saw him eating while his son (Imam) Ali son of al-Husayn (Zainul-'Abidin [as]) was fasting. The man (apparently quite confused) asked (Imam) al-Husayn (as), 'Why is it that I visited al-Hassan (as) and found him eating while you yourself were fasting, and now I visit you '!?(and find you not fasting (while your son is

Imam) al-Husayn (as) said, 'Al-Hassan was then the Imam; he did not fast for fear) his fast would be regarded as a Sunnah followed by people. When he died and I became the Imam, I did not want my fast to be regarded as a Sunnah so people would follow my example.'" What Imam al-Husayn (as) meant was that to fast on the day of Arafat was very highly recommended but not obligatory. Had he (as) and his older brother al-Hassan (as) fasted it, people would have regarded its fast as an .obligation rather than a highly recommended act of worship

Bihar al-Anwar and 'Ilal al-Sharai' cite al-Mutawakkil's son quoting al-Sa'd-Abadi quoting his father quoting Ibn Abu 'Umayr saying that Abu Abdullah (Imam al-Sadiq [as]) said, "Fasting the ٨th of Thul-Hijjah suffices to wipe out the sins

committed in an entire year, and fasting the day of Arafat (the next day) suffices to ".atone for the sins committed in two years

The best among Allah's creation, our master Muhammad (S), has described fast as the cure for the souls and the bodies, saying, "Fast so you may heal." He has also revealed the fact that everything in this life has a purification (zakat), and that "Fast is .the purification (zakat) of bodies," as we are told on p. ۵۹ of al-Saduq's Amali

A Muslim understands the fast to be the setting on equal footing between the poor and the rich before the Almighty, for if the rich desire something, they have the means to get it; therefore, the Almighty wished to establish equality among His servants and to let the rich taste the pain of hunger so that their hearts may be softened, and to .thus make them compassionate towards the weak and the hungry

Siyam al-Dahr: How to Fast all Your Life (۶

On p. ۲۵۸, Vol. ۱, of 'Ilal al-Sharai', and also on p. ۹۲, Vol. ۹۴, of Bihar al-Anwar, Imam al-Rida (as) was asked why an optional fast is recommended for the entire year, and he answered by saying that it served to complement obligatory fast. Then he was asked, "Why is there an optional fast for one day out of each ten days?" He (as) said, "It is so because Allah, the Praised and Exalted One, says, 'Whoever does a good deed will be rewarded ten-fold' (Surat al-An'am, verse ۱۶); therefore, one who fasts

one day in each ten days will be regarded (according to this verse) as though he had fasted the whole time."

Salman al-Farisi, may Allah be pleased with him, used to say, "Fasting three [non-consecutive] days a month equals fasting the whole dahr, the whole time; so, if one can find anything beyond that, let him fast it!" Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) was asked why a Thursday of the first tenth days is to be fasted, a Thursday of the last, and a Wednesday in-between are the designated days for such fast, and his answer was, "The deeds of each servant of Allah are displayed before Allah on each Thursday; therefore, He wished that it should be done while such servant is observing a fast. "Why another Thursday's fast at the end of the month, then?" the Imam (as) was asked. "It is so because if his deeds for eight days are displayed while he is fasting is more honorable for him and better than if he is not fasting.

The reason for choosing a Wednesday in the second (middle) ten days of the month, according to Imam al-Sadiq (as), is due to the fact that Allah, the most Honored, the most Sublime, created hell on that day; it was on it that He annihilated the early generations; it is a day of continuous bad omen; so, He wished that His servants should shun such a bad omen by fasting that day."

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) quotes his forefathers (as) saying

that the Messenger of Allah (S) once asked his companions, "Which one of you fasts the whole time?" Salman al-Farisi, may Allah have mercy on his soul, said, "I do, O Messenger of Allah!" The Messenger of Allah (S) asked them, "Which one of you says prayers the whole night?" Salman al-Farisi, may Allah have mercy on his soul, again said, "I do, O Messenger of Allah!" The Messenger of Allah (S) asked them, "Which one of you recites the entire text of the Qur'an every day?" Salman al-Farisi, may Allah have mercy on his soul, for the third time said, "I do, O Messenger of Allah!" One of the Prophet's companions became angry and said, "O Messenger of Allah! Salman is a Persian who wants to brag and demonstrate his superiority over us, we men of .Quraysh

You asked us, 'Which one of you fasts the whole time?' and he said he does so, while he eats most of the time. And you asked us, 'Which one of you says prayers the entire night?' and he again said he did so, while he sleeps most of the night. And you asked us, 'Which one of you recites the entire text of the Qur'an every day?' and he for the third time said that he did so, while most of the time he is silent." The Messenger of Allah (S) rebuked that man and said, "Keep your silence, so-and-so, for how far you ,are from Luqman the Wise! Ask him

and he will explain to you," whereupon that companion turned to Salman and asked him thus: "O father of Abdullah! You have claimed that you fast the whole time, "?haven't you

Salman answered him in the affirmative, so the companion said, "But I have seen you eating most of the time!" Salman said, "It is not what you say! I fast three days in ,every month, and Allah, the most Exalted, the most Glorified One, says

.(Whoever does a good deed will be rewarded ten-fold' (Quran Surat al-An'am, ۶: ۱۶'

And I join the month of Sha'ban with the month of Ramadhan in my fast, so it is regarded as though I fast the whole time." The man then asked him, "But you claim that you spend your entire night offering prayers, don't you?" Salman answered in the affirmative, whereupon that man said to him, "How so since most of your night you are in bed?" Salman said, "It is not as you say. I have heard my beloved Messenger of Allah (S) say, 'Whoever remains in a state of tahara (purification) during his sleep will be regarded as though he spent the whole night offering prayers,' and I do remain "!tahir

The man still asked him, "Have you not claimed that you recite the entire text of the Qur'an every day?" Salman said, "I have." The man then asked him, "But you spend most of the day silent!" Salman said, "It is not as you say, but I have

heard my beloved Messenger of Allah (S) telling Ali (as): ‘O father of al-Hassan (as)! Your similitude in my nation is like that of Surat al-Ikhlas: whoever recites it once is considered as having recited one third of the entire text of the Qur'an, and whoever recites it twice is considered as having recited two-thirds of the Qur'an, while whoever recites it thrice will be regarded as having recited the entire text of the Qur'an; whoever loves you with his tongue completes one third of his iman (conviction), and whoever loves you with both his tongue and heart completes two thirds of his iman, whereas whoever loves you with his tongue and heart and assists .you with his hand (I.e. physically with his might and means) perfects his iman

I swear by the One Who sent me with the truth, O Ali! Had all people on earth loved you as those in the heavens do, nobody would have been tormented with the Fire,' and I do recite Surat al-Ikhlas thrice daily." The man then stood up and left as if someone had filled his mouth with a rock (as the Arabs put it). This incident is recorded .on pp. ۹۳-۹۴, Vol. ۹۴, of Bihar al-Anwar

In the same reference cited above, Imam al-Sadiq (as) quotes his forefathers citing the Messenger of Allah (S) saying, "I entered Paradise [during my ascension, mi’raj] and found most of its people to be those who are not evil, who are wise in spending ,their wealth

".and who fast three days a month

Ibn Tareef quotes Ibn ‘Alwan quoting Imam al-Sadiq (as) quoting his father Imam al-Baqir (as) saying that Ali (as) used to imitate the fast observed by the Messenger of Allah (S), saying, "The Messenger of Allah (S) fasted siyam al-dahr as long as Allah willed, then he stopped doing so and observed the fast of his brother Dawood (as) (David): a day's fast for Allah, and a day for himself (to rest) as long as Allah willed. Then he stopped doing that, too, and started fasting each Monday and Thursday for .(as long as Allah willed. Then he stopped doing even that and upheld siyam al-beed (۱

Imam Ali (as) concludes his statement by saying that the Messenger of Allah (S) continued to do so till he passed away. On p. ۱۰۲, Vol. ۹۴, of Bihar al-Anwar, the author states that Muhammad ibn Yahya has quoted Hammad ibn ‘Uthman quoting Imam Abu Abdullah al-Sadiq (as) saying, "The Messenger of Allah (S) died while observing a fast of three days a month, saying, ‘They equal fasting the whole time, and their fast removes ill intentions and feelings of hostility.' He (S) was asked, ‘Why were these specific days chosen for such fast?' He (S) answered by saying, ‘Retribution was inflicted upon nations before us during those days;' so, the Prophet (S) observed the ".fast of those ominous days

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted on p. ۱۰۸, Vol. ۹۴, of Bihar al-Anwar as saying

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Explanation of the meaning of siyam al-beed, fasting the "white days," has already -۱ .been indicated on p. ۳۰ above

that one who observes the fast of the month of Ramadhan and follows it by fasting six days during the month of Shawwal will be rewarded as though he had fasted the .entire year

One may wonder whether offering sadaqa (charity) is more rewarding than fasting. It is. On p. ۱۰۲, Vol. ۹۴, of Bihar al-Anwar, it is stated that Imam Abu Abdullah al-Sadiq (as) was asked once by Ibrahim al-Muthanna, one of his followers, "I have found it very hard for me lately to fast three days a month; so, is there any way I can make it up by, say, giving one dirham by way of charity for each of these days?" The Imam (as) ".answered, "One dirham's charity is even better than fasting one day

In the same reference, on p. ۱۰۶, Salih ibn 'Uqbah said to Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as), "May my life be sacrificed for your sake! I have grown to be an old man, and I feel too feeble to observe the fast of these days." The Imam (as) responded by saying, "Then offer sadaqa of one dirham (cash equivalent in value to ۳.۱۲ grams of silver) for each day." The Imam noticed that the man did not seem to be fully convinced, so he said to him, "Do you think one dirham for each of these days is too little? Feeding one ".indigent person is better than the fast of a whole month

The Prophet (S) preaching about the Month of Ramadhan

.The following incident has been narrated by al-Saduq on pp

:of his Al-Amali thus ۸۴-۸۵

Muhammad ibn Ibrahim says that Ahmed ibn Muhammad-al-Hamadani says that Ali ibn al-Hassan ibn Fadal quotes his father quoting al-Hassan's father Imam Ali ibn Musa al-Rida (as) who in turn quotes his father Imam Musa ibn Ja'far (as) quoting his father the master of martyrs Imam al-Husayn ibn Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) saying that the :Messenger of Allah (S) delivered a sermon once in which he said

O people! A month has approached you laden with blessing, mercy and forgiveness; it is a month which Allah regards as the best of all months. Its days, in the sight of Allah, are the best of days; its nights are the best of nights; its hours are the best of hours. It is a month in which you are invited to be the guests of Allah, and you are regarded during it as worthy of enjoying Allah's Grace. Your breathing in it praises the Almighty, and your sleeping adores Him. Your voluntary acts of worship are accepted, and your .pleas are answered

Ask Allah your Lord, therefore, in sincere intentions and pure hearts to enable you to fast during it and to recite His Book, for only a wretch is the one who is deprived of Allah's forgiveness during this great month. And let your hunger and thirst during it remind you of the hunger and thirst of the Day of Resurrection. Give alms to the poor and indigent among you; surround your elderly with respect, and be

.kind to your youngsters

Visit your kin and safeguard your tongues, and do not look at what Allah has prohibited you from seeing, and do not listen to anything your ears are forbidden to hear. Be kind to the orphans of others so that your own orphans will equally receive kindness. Repent your sins to Allah and raise your hands to Him in supplication during the times of your prayers, for they are the best times during which the Almighty looks .with mercy to His servants and answers their pleas when they plead to Him

O people! Your souls are pawned by your deeds; therefore, release them by seeking Allah's forgiveness. Your backs are over-burdened by the weight of your sins; therefore, lighten their burden by prolonging your prostration. Be informed that the Exalted and Almighty has sworn by His Dignity not to torture those who perform their prayers and prostrate to Him, and not to terrify them by the sight of the fire when people are resurrected for judgment. O people! Whoever among you provides iftar to a believer during this month will receive a reward equal to one who sets a slave free, .and all his past sins will be forgiven

Having said so, people said to him: "O Messenger of Allah! Not all of us can do that!" ,He (S), thereupon, responded by saying

Shun the fire of hell even by half a date! Shun the fire of hell even by a drink of water! O People! Whoever among

you improves his conduct during this month will have a safe passage on al-Sirat al-Mustaqeem] (the straight path) when many feet will slip away, and whoever among you decreases the burdens of his slave (or anyone who works for him) will be rewarded by Allah decreasing his reckoning. Whoever among you abstains from .harming others will be spared the Wrath of the Almighty when he meets Him

Whoever among you affords generosity to an orphan will be rewarded by Allah being generous to him on the Day of Judgment. Whoever among you improves the ties with his kin will be rewarded by Allah including him in His mercy, and whoever among you severs his ties with his kin, Allah will withhold His mercy from him upon meeting Him. Whoever among you offers voluntary prayers, Allah will decree a clearance for him .from the torment of the fire

Whoever among you performs an obligation will receive the reward of one who has performed seventy obligations in other months. Whoever among you increases the sending of blessings unto me, Allah will make the balance of his good deeds weigh heavily when scales will be light. Whoever among you recites one verse of the Holy Qur'an will receive the blessing of one who recites the entire Holy Qur'an in another .month

O people! The gates of heaven in this month are kept open; so, pray Allah your Lord ,not to close them against you, and the gates of the fire are kept closed; so

pray Allah your Lord not to open them for you; and the devils are kept chained; .therefore, pray Allah your Lord not to unleash them against you

Advising the great sahabi Abu Tharr al-Ghifari, may Allah be pleased with him, regarding the fast being a protection against the fire, he (S) is quoted saying, "Shall I inform you of a deed which, if you do it, will keep Satan away from you as much as the distance between the east of the earth and the west?" People answered, "O yes, indeed, O Messenger of Allah!" He (S) said, "Fast darkens his (Satan's) face; alms break his back; the desire to please Allah and the giving of assistance to do good ".deeds cut his tail off, and seeking Allah's forgiveness cuts off his aorta

Then he added, "For everything there is a purification (zakat), and the purification of bodies is the fast." He (S) is also quoted saying, "One who fasts is considered to be adoring his Creator even while sleeping on his bed as long as he does not backbite any Muslim." He (S) has also said, "There are two merry occasions for anyone who performs the fast: one when he breaks his fast, and one when he meets his Lord, the Exalted, the Almighty. I swear by the One Who controls Muhammad's life, the excess on the mouth of one who fasts is better in the sight of Allah than the sweet smell of ".musk

He (S) has also said

that the Exalted and Almighty has said (in a Qudsi hadith) that all good deeds of a descendant of Adam are His (to reward) "except the fast, for it is mine, and I shall reward for it. All good deeds of the son of Adam are rewarded with ten to seven hundred times except perseverance, for it is mine and I reward for it." So, the knowledge of the rewards of perseverance is with Allah, and "perseverance" means .fast

Regarding the interpretation of His saying (in the Holy Qur'an) "... and seek aid with perseverance," meaning the fast, it is reported that the person who fasts enjoys the gardens of Paradise and the angels keep praying for him till he breaks his fast. If a believer stands during a portion of the night to perform additional optional prayers, .then he wakes up fasting, no sin will be recorded against him

Whenever he takes one step, it will be recorded as a good deed for him, and if he dies during daytime, his soul will ascend the heights of heaven. If he lives to break his fast, the Almighty will consider him among those who often return to Him for forgiveness. In the book titled Thawab al-A’mal, relying on the authority of Abu Abdullah who quotes his forefathers, peace be upon all of them, the author, namely Shaikh al-Qummi al-Saduq, quotes one tradition indicating that the Messenger of Allah (S) has said, "The sleep of someone fasting is like adoration, and his

".breath praises the Almighty

Norms of Conduct related to the Fast

Having come to know the sanctity of this glorious month, the month of Ramadhan, which is Allah's favorite month in which He revealed the Holy Qur'an "a guidance to men and clear proofs of the guidance and the distinction," the month which He decreed that Muslims should fast during daytime and offer prayers during nighttime, and having come to know some of its merits, we ought to be familiar with the ethics .related to fasting during this glorious month

There are certain norms of conduct, preparations, and recommended deeds related to it which we must not take lightly so that Allah may accept our fast and prayers and forgive us; He indeed is the oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful. The following are the norms of conduct related to the month of Ramadhan and some highly recommended :deeds (a'mal) to be performed during it

Preparations in anticipation of welcoming the advent of the month of Ramadhan (١ include repentance, cessation of doing anything prohibited, and the returning of trusts to their owners. One should not bear grudge against any other Muslim and should try hard to remove existing hostilities. He should abandon any sin he has been addicted to doing, or contemplating upon doing, and he should rely on Allah and make the intention to fast during the month of Ramadhan with sincerity, inwardly and .outwardly

He should exert himself with might and means to obey the Almighty, abstain from (٢ committing anything prohibited, abandon disputes and envy, avoid

hurting people in any way, resort to silence except when praying to the Almighty, .recite the Holy Qur'an and do every good deed he is able to do

He should lower his gaze and not look at anything Allah has decreed he should not (۳ look at. He must avoid listening to vain talk or anything that may displease Allah, and avoid the places where things causing Allah's Wrath may be done, and not to move .except in obedience to Allah

Imam al-Sadiq, peace be upon him, as quoted on p. ۳۵۱, Vol. ۹۴, of Bihar al-Anwar, and also on p. ۸۷, Vol. ۴, of Kulayni's Al-Kafi, relying on the authority of Muhammad ibn Muslim al-Thaqafi, has said, "To fast is not just to abstain from eating and drinking. Rather, each of your senses has rights on you related to the fast. When you fast, you should let your hearing, vision, hair, skin, tongue, stomach and modesty fast with you, and you should safeguard yourself so that there is a distinction between the day you ".fast and the day you do not

On p. ۳۵۱, Vol. ۹۴, of Bihar al-Anwar, it is recorded that the greatest Prophet (۴ Muhammad ibn Abdullah (S) is our role model and leader. Once he (S) heard a woman cursing one of her neighbors, so he ordered some food to be brought, then he ordered her to eat it. She told him that she was fasting, so he asked her, "How can you fast and still curse your

".neighbor? Fast is not just abstention from eating and drinking

He (S) is also quoted saying, "Anyone who fasts during the month of Ramadhan and protects his modesty and tongue and not hurt anyone, the Almighty will forgive his sins, the past and the future, and He will release him from the fire of hell and permit him to enter the eternal abode of bliss. He will accept his intercession as many times ".as the number of sands in the lands of the guilty ones living among the monotheists

Imam al-Sadiq (as) quotes his ancestors who quote the Commander of the Faithful (۵ Ali ibn Abu Talib, peace be upon them all, regarding what things the Messenger of Allah (S) has prohibited, saying, "Anyone who backbites another Muslim will have voided his own fast and diminished his wudu (ablution), and he will come on the Day of Resurrection suffering from a smell more foul than that of a cadaver, offending others waiting for their reckoning. So, if he dies before repenting, he dies like one who ".considered everything Allah has prohibited as permissible

Imam al-Sadiq (as) quotes his forefathers who in turn quote the Messenger of Allah (۶ (S) saying, "Anyone who starts his day fasting and is cursed and he responds by saying, 'I am fasting; peace be with you; I shall not curse you as you have cursed me,' the Almighty will then say, 'My servant has sought refuge with fast against the evil of one of My servants. Protect

"'.him, therefore, from My fire, and take him into My garden

It is recommended that the fasting person should, if possible, spend half the (٧ daytime sleeping. The Prophet (S) is quoted saying that the sleep of a fasting person is .an act of adoration and his breath praises the Almighty

(Breaking the Fast (Iftar

,The Glorified and Praised One has said

and eat and drink until the whiteness of the day becomes distinct from the ..." blackness of the night at dawn, then complete the fast till nighttime" (Holy Qur'an, .(Surah Baqarah ٢:١٨٧

The Exalted and Omniscient has clarified in this glorious verse the time to start the fast which is when the white thread can be distinguished from the black one at the time of daybreak, and the time of breaking the fast, at the end of the fast during the .entire daytime till the approach of the night

Since fast in Islam is not merely abstention from eating and drinking, but rather a transformation from a physical state to a spiritual height whereby the Muslim pleases his Maker, Islam has set certain rules for breaking the fast which are derived from the Sunnah of His greatest Prophet and his Progeny, peace and blessings be upon them, :which may be enUmarated thus

the invocations related to the breaking of the fast which take us from the physical (١ ;state, through our fast, to a spiritual height

sharing our food with the poor and the indigent, and Muslims breaking their fast (٢ ;with one another

and

.foods recommended for breaking the fast (٣

Invocations at the time of Breaking of the Fast

Relying on the authority of Imam al-Sadiq (as), Shaikh al-Saduq, in his work Al-Misbah, quotes the Imam (as) citing his forefathers saying that the Messenger of Allah (S) used to say the following whenever he broke his fast: "O Almighty God! For You have we fasted, and with Your sustenance have we broken our fast; so, accept it from us. Thirst has dissipated; the veins have become wet, and the reward has been ".secured by the Will of Allah

He (S) is also quoted as saying that if anyone says the following invocation at the time of breaking his fast, he will come out of his sins and face the world as he faced it the first time upon his birth: "O Great One! O Great One! You are Allah; there is no god but "!You! Forgive my great sins for none forgives the great sins but You, O Great One

The book Al-Iqbal, relying on the authority of Imam Zainul-'Abidin, peace be upon him, states that whoever recites the Qadr chapter at the time of breaking his fast and at the time of his last meal before daybreak (I.e., suhoor) will be regarded by the Almighty as one who sheds his own blood (I.e. becomes a martyr) for the cause of .Allah

The Prophet (S) has said the following to Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (as): "O father of al-Hassan! The month of Ramadhan is approaching; so, recite your invocation

before you break your fast for Gabriel has informed me that the Almighty has said that He would accept the prayers of whoever recited this invocation during the month of Ramadhan before breaking his fast, before starting his fast, and before saying his prayers, and He will answer ten of his pleas, forgive his sins, remove the cause of his distress, eliminate the reason behind his agony, fulfill his worldly wishes, help him achieve his objective, count his good deeds among those of the prophets and the foremost to believe in them, and he will come on the Day of Resurrection with a face shining like the full moon." The invocation referred to above may be translated thus:

Lord! You are the Lord of the great light, of the lofty Throne, of the over-flowing sea, of the great intercession, of the dear light, of the Torah, of the Gospel, of the Psalms and of the great Qur'an! You are the Lord of all those in the heavens and those on earth! There is no god in them other than You, and You are the Mighty One in the heavens and on earth; there is none mighty in them but You! And You are the King in the heavens and on earth; there is no king in them other than You!

I beseech You by the greatness of Your great Name and the light of Your shining greatness, and by Your domain! O Living One, O Sustainer! I beseech You by

the greatness of Your Name which shines upon the heavens and the earth, and by Your Name whereby the first generations achieved righteousness and so will the last ones! O Living One before there was anyone living, and O Living One after everyone !else is no longer alive

There is no god but You! I beseech You to send blessings unto Muhammad and the progeny of Muhammad and to forgive my sins and ease my affair and grant me a speedy recovery and keep my feet firm on the path of the religion of Muhammad and the progeny of Muhammad and make my deeds acceptable and grant me the like of what You granted Your sincere servants and devotees! I am a sincere believer in You, !and upon You do I rely and to You do I entrust my fate

I beseech You to grant me, my family and offspring, all goodness, and to keep away from us all evil! You are the Compassionate, the ever-Giving, the Creator of the heavens and the earth! You bestow goodness upon whomsoever You will and You withhold it from whomsoever You please! Bless me with Your mercy, for You are the .most Merciful of the merciful ones

The Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (as), used to say the following whenever he was about to break his fast: "In the Name of Allah! Lord! To You have we fasted, and with Your sustenance have we broken our fast! Lord! Accept our

".deeds, for You hear, and you know

Imam al-Sadiq (as) has recommended that you say the following every night during the month of Ramadhan at the time of breaking the fast: "All praise is due to Allah Who enabled us to fast and provided us with sustenance so that we may break our fast (therewith). Lord! Accept our deeds, help us fast, protect us during it, accept it from us an easy acceptance, and grant us good health and well-being. All praise is due ".to Allah Who has enabled us to fast a day of the month of Ramadhan

According to the author of Al-Iqbal, who relies on the authority of Muhammad ibn Abu Qurrah, in a chapter dealing with recommended deeds during the month of Ramadhan, through the authority of Imam al-Kazim who quotes his father who quotes his grandfather who quotes Imam al-Hassan ibn Ali, peace be upon all of these Imams, the invocation of everyone who fasts during the month of Ramadhan is accepted as soon as he breaks his fast; so, upon eating the first morsel, he used to !say, "In the Name of Allah! O You Who expands forgiveness, forgive me

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. O You Who expands forgiveness! I implore You to forgive me!" Whoever says so upon breaking his fast will be forgiven. Quoting his forefathers, peace be upon him and them, Imam al-Kazim (as) says, "If you enter the evening after having fasted, and you say

the following as soon as you break your fast: 'Lord! To You have I fasted, and with Your sustenance have I broken my fast! Upon You have I relied and depended,' you ".will receive a reward equal to that of all those who fasted that day

It is recommended that you ought to perform your prayers before finishing the iftar except when there is someone else waiting to eat, or if you are more inclined to eat first. In his Al-Tahtheeb, Shaikh al-Saduq quotes Imam al-Baqir (as) saying, "During the month of Ramadhan, you should perform your prayers, then break your fast, except if you are with others who are waiting to break theirs; so, do not do something which they would not be doing but break your fast with them then perform your prayers; otherwise, perform your prayers first.' So I asked him why it was so; he answered: 'You have to select one of two options: breaking the fast or performing the prayers, and you should choose the best of them, and the best option is performing the prayers.' Then he added, 'If you perform your obligatory prayers while still "'.fasting, and your prayers conclude your fast, it is surely better for you

In Mizan al-Hikma, the Prophet (S) is quoted saying: "The plea of anyone who fasts * ".is answered when he breaks his fast

It is reported in al-Majlisi's Bihar al-Anwar that Imam al-Sadiq (as) has said that the * Messenger of Allah (S) used to say the following

whenever he ate with others: "May those fasting break their fast with you, and may ".your food feed those who are devoted to Allah

Both al-Tirmithi and Ibn Majah have quoted the Messenger of Allah (S) saying, "The ⁕ supplications of three types of persons will never be rejected: those who fast till they ".break their fast, a fair Imam, and one who is wronged

On p. ۵۳ of his Amali (or Majalis), the faqih and mentor Abu Ja’far Muhammad ibn Ali ⁕ ibn al-Husayn ibn Musa ibn Babawayh al-Qummi quotes his father saying that Sa’d ibn Abdullah quotes Ahmed ibn al-Husayn quoting Muhammad ibn Jumhoor, and also Muhammad ibn Ziyad, citing Muhammad ibn Muslim al-Thaqafi saying that he heard ,Imam Abu Ja’far al-Baqir (as) saying

The Almighty and Exalted One has angels who are charged with those who perform" the fast. They seek forgiveness for them during each day of the month of Ramadhan till its end. Every night, they call upon those who fast, when they break their fast, ‘O servants of Allah! Receive the glad tidings! You have felt hungry for a short while, so you shall be fed for quite a long period of time! Blessed are you and yours!' In the last night of the month of Ramadhan, they call upon them saying, ‘O servants of Allah! Receive the glad tidings! Allah has indeed forgiven your sins and accepted your "!repentance! So see how you shall fare from now on

The Month of Repetance

The month of Ramadhan is known

as the month of repentance and forgiveness. What is repentance? Does it suffice to say, "I regret and repent and hope Allah will forgive me" to be forgiven? How does the Almighty expect His sinning servants to seek repentance, and what assurances, if any, can they receive from Him of His acceptance of their repentance? What are the ?consequences if one's repentance is rejected

If you have not wondered about these questions, and if you have not sought the answers for them, what is your chance of saving your skin from the fire of Hell? One is tempted even to go beyond all of this to ask: What does hell look like, and what are the other situations, starting from the moment of death, of which one should be ?apprehensive and for which he/she should prepare himself/herself

These are very serious questions, and to answer all of them requires a book by itself especially if their healing benefits are included. Verse ۸۲ of Surat al-Israa refers to such healing when the Almighty says, and most surely what He says is the truth, "And We reveal of the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to the believers." NUmarous ahadith of the Holy Prophet of Islam (S) and his Ahl al-Bayt (as) have explained which verses heal what ailments. We need your prayers, dear reader, to enable us to publish a book containing such precious and useful knowledge for our .believing brethren

Qur'anic verses referring to repentance are nUmarous. Repentance

is so importance that the Almighty dedicated an entire Chapter in His Book (the Holy Qur'an) to it: Surat al-Tawbah, Chapter of repentance (No. ٩). Other references to repentance can be found in Chapters such as these: al-Baqarah, al-Maaida, al-An'am, Hud, al-Furqan, al-Qasas, al-Mujadila, al-Muzzammil, Aali 'Imran, al-Nisa, al-A'raf, al-Nahl, al-Noor, Ghafir, al-Ahqaf, al-Tahrim, al-Hujurat, al-Furqan, al-Ahzab, al-Buruj, al-Shura, al-Tahrim, al-Nasr, al-Ra'd, al-Furqan, and many others. As a matter of fact, Qur'anic verses referring to repentance, death and the life hereafter outnumber all .verses dealing with Islamic obligations combined

This is how important repentance is. Nobody is exempted from having to seek Allah's forgiveness and to repent for his faults and shortcomings, not even the Prophets and Messengers of Allah, including the very greatest of all of them, our Prophet and Messenger Muhammad (S) who used to seek forgiveness at least a hundred times a .day without having committed a sin

On p. ۴۰۷, Vol. ۲, of al-Kulayni's Al-Kafi, Imam Abu Abdullah al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying that once a servant of Allah truly repents, that is, regrets having done something wrong and ceases to repeat doing it, Allah will love him and grants him a .covering in the life of this world and in the hereafter

Mu'awiya ibn Wahab asked the Imam (as) what kind of covering he was talking about, whereupon the Imam (as) said, "He (Allah) will order the angels recording his deeds to wipe out the record of his sins, then He inspires his senses to hide

his sins, then He inspires the regions of the earth to hide whatever sins that man committed in them; so, he will meet the Almighty without carrying the burden of any sin, and there will be none to testify against him [on the Day of Judgment]." The Almighty has even assigned angels to pray Him to forgive those on earth and in the heavens as these verses from Surat al-Mu'min testify:

Those who bear the 'Arsh, and those around it, glorify and praise their Lord; they believe in Him and implore His forgiveness for those who believe (saying): Lord! Your Mercy has encompassed everything, and so has Your Knowledge; so forgive those who turn (to You) in repentance and follow Your Path, and protect them from the torment of the blazing fire! And grant them, O Lord, admission into the Garden of Eternity which You have promised them and the righteous among their fathers, wives, and posterity, for You are the One Exalted in Might, the all-Knowing. (Qur'an, Surah Ghafir ۴۰:۷-۹)

And the Almighty never tires of forgiving His servants and accepting their repentance. Muhammad ibn Yahya quotes Ahmed ibn Muhammad quoting Ibn Mahbub quoting al-'Alaa quoting Muhammad ibn Muslim quoting Imam Abu [father of] Ja'far al-Baqir (as) saying the following to Muhammad: "O Muhammad ibn Muslim! A sinner's sins are forgiven when he repents them; so, let a believer do good deeds following his repentance and [Allah's] forgiveness. By Allah! This applies only to those of deep conviction." Muhammad asked the

Imam (as), "What if he goes back to committing those sins after having repented and "?sought forgiveness for them, then he repents again

The Imam (as) said, "O Muhammad ibn Muslim! Do you think that a servant of Allah regrets having committed a sin, then seeks forgiveness for it and repents, that Allah does not accept his repentance?" Muhammad said, "But he has done so repeatedly: "...[he commits a sin then repents and seeks [Allah's] forgiveness [and so on

He (as) said, "Whenever a believer returns to Allah and seeks His forgiveness and the acceptance of his own repentance, Allah will return to him forgiving, and Allah is most Forgiving, most Merciful; He accepts repentance and overlooks the sins; therefore, beware of letting any believer lose hope of achieving Allah's mercy." This dialogue is .recorded on p. ۴۰۹, Vol. ۱, of al-Kulayni's Al-Kafi

But nobody should ever take the Almighty for granted. A man in the company of the Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali (as) once said: "Astaghfirullah." The Imam (as) said to him, "May your mother lose you! Do you really know what forgiveness is? Forgiveness is the degree of ‘Illiyyeen (see verses ۱۸ and ۱۹ of Surat al-Mutaffifun), :and it is a proper noun incorporating six meanings

;regret about the past (۱

;the determination never to go back to doing it again (۲

that you should pay people what they owe you till you meet Allah without having (۳ ;any burden to bear

that you should make (۴

p: ۸۱

;up for any religious obligation and meet its requirements

that you should approach your flesh that grew out of consuming what is unlawful (۵ and make it dissolve through your grief till your skin touches your bones and new flesh grows between them; and

that you make your body taste of the pain of obedience [to Allah's commandments] (۶ just as you made it taste the sweetness of disobedience. It is only after that can you say: Astaghfirullah." This is recorded in Nahjul Balagha (wise saying number ۲۵۳ of the original Arabic text; all present English translations of this great book fall short of .(doing justice to its original text

A Glance at Paradise and Hell

point

Although the Holy Qur'an tells us a good deal about Paradise and hell, more details are provided through Qudsi ahadith related by archangel Jibraeel (Gabriel), peace be upon him, to the Messenger of Allah (S) who, in turn, is quoted by his right hand, Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (as), and by the other eleven infallible Imams (as). The Prophet of Islam (S), moreover, was able, during his ascension (mi'raj) to heaven not only to see but even to walk through Paradise, to eat of its fruit, and to observe its grounds. He (S) was also able to cast a look at hell and see the methods whereby its residents are .being tortured

Both al-Tirmithi and Abu Dawood quote the following Qudsi hadith as narrated by the :(Messenger of Allah (S

When Allah created Paradise and hell, He sent Gabriel to

Paradise saying, "Look at it and at what I have prepared therein for its inhabitants." He came to it and looked at it, observing what Allah had prepared therein for its inhabitants, then he returned to the Almighty and said, "By Your Glory do I swear that ".nobody hears of it without (desiring to) enter it

So He ordered it to be surrounded with obstacles and hardships then ordered Gabriel to return to it and see what obstacles and hardships with which it was surrounded. Having returned to it and observed it, he addressed the Almighty saying, "By Your ".Glory do I swear that I fear lest not even one person should be able to enter it

Allah said to him, "Go to take a look at hell and at what I have prepared therein for its inhabitants," and Gabriel found it to be layers above layers. He returned and said, "By your Glory do I swear that nobody who hears of it will ever (wish to) enter it." So He ordered it to be surrounded with incitements and attractions then ordered Gabriel to return to it. Having returned to it, he said, "By Your Glory do I swear that I am afraid ".lest nobody should be able to escape entering it

.Let us now glance at each of these places separately

A Description of Paradise (۱

Paradise (or heaven) is of different degrees of loftiness and happiness. Unlike hell, which is a very deep pit of fire, Paradise is level (or, say, many levels), so much

so that even its rivers do not bore holes on its surface but flow miraculously in their paths without scathing the surface. And there is more than one heaven or garden. Verse ۶۴ of Surat al-Rahman (Chapter ۵۵) is comprised of one single word: Mudhammatan, which describes two dark-green gardens, while verse ۶۲ of the same sura tells us that there are "Besides these two gardens there are two other ones," bringing the total number of gardens comprising the eternal abode of bliss to four. .The highest pinnacle of Paradise is the Garden of Eden, or jannat ‘adan

On p. ۹۹, Vol. ۱۳, of Lisan al-Arabs, we are told that jannat means: orchard, a garden with many fruit trees. Jannat ‘adan is described in: verse ۷۲ of Surat al-Tawbah (Ch. ۹), verse ۲۳ of Surat al-Ra’d (Ch. ۱۳), verse ۳۱ of Surat al-Nahl (Ch. ۱۶), verse ۳۱ of Surat al-Kahaf (Ch. ۱۸), verse ۶۱ of Surat Maryam (Ch. ۱۹), verse ۷۶ of Surat Ta-Ha (Ch. ۲۰), verse ۳۳ of Surat Fatir (Ch. ۳۵), verse ۵۰ of Surat Sad (Ch. ۳۸), verse ۸ of Surat Ghafir .((Ch. ۴۰), verse ۱۲ of Surat al-Saff (Ch. ۶۱), and verse ۸ of Surat al-Bayyinah (Ch. ۹۸

On p. ۲۷۹, Vol. ۱۳, of Lisan al-Arab, we are told that jannat ‘adan means "the place of eternity…, the very central (al-awsat) garden." Page ۴۲۷, Vol. ۷, of Lisan al-Arabs suggests that one of the meanings of al-awsat is: the best. No wonder, then, to see more

reference to jannat ‘adan than to, say, al-firdaws, Paradise, in the Holy Qur'an. This leaves us with the conclusion that the very best, the central, the focal, the highest .pinnacle of al-jannat, the heavenly Garden, is jannat ‘adan

Paradise, or al-firdaws, as it is called in Arabic, is a loan word. The Arabs to whom Prophet Muhammad (S) was sent had no concept whatsoever of life after death, of heaven and hell. This is one of the main challenges faced by the Prophet (S) when he .started preaching Islam to them

The Holy Qur'an refers to this challenge in Surat Ya-Sin: "And he strikes out a likeness for Us and forgets his own creation. Says he: Who will give life to the bones when they are rotten? Say: The One Who brought them into existence the first time will give life (back) to them, and He is Cognizant of all creation" (۳۶:۷۹). Even the author of the best Arabic lexicon, Lisan al-Arab, is not sure whether firdaws is a word borrowed from Latin or Persian, nor is al-Majlisi, as the latter admits on p. ۹۱, Vol. ۸, of his one hundred .and ten volume encylopedia__not counting Vol. Zero__known as Bihar al-Anwar

A third view, which may be more accurate, is that it is neither; its origin may be Babylonian. The other word used in the Holy Qur'an for it is Jannat, garden. But Paradise is a lot more than just a garden or an orchard. The Arabs never had the habit

of living inside their orchards. Their homes, built of sun dried or fire baked clay, were .grouped together rather than scattered inside orchards as is the case with Paradise

The presence of a good number of Jews in both Medina (where they were more nUmarous due to the city's tolerable climate) and Mecca permitted the Jews' contribution to such loan words. Jahannam, a derivation from Hebrew Gehinnom(۱) .(Latin Gehenna), hell, is another

An overall "view" of this heavenly place can fill a book and may be out of the scope of this book; therefore, let us take a look at its gates as seen by an eye-witness: Prophet Muhammad (S) who is quoted on p. ۱۴۴, Vol. ۸, of Bihar al-Anwar, describing it as :transmitted by Abdullah ibn Mas'ud thus

When my Lord permitted me to ascend to heaven, Gabriel (as) said to me, "I have been ordered to show you both Paradise and hell." So I saw Paradise and the blessings it contains, and I saw hell and the types of torment it has. Paradise has eight gates, on each one of which are four statements, each one of which is better than the world and what is in it for those who comprehend and act upon them. And hell has seven gates, on each one of which are three statements, each one of which is better .than this world and what is therein for those who comprehend and act upon them

Gabriel (as) said to me, "O Muhammad! Read

Acoording to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), its full Hebrew name is ge hen -۱ Hinnom, the valley of the son of Hinnom, denoting a place near Jerusalem where, according to Jeremiah ۱۹:۵, children were burnt in sacrifice to Baal, the fertility god of polytheist Canaanites, or to Molech (Moloch). For more information, refer to II Kings .۲۳:۱۰ and Jeremiah ۳۲:۳۵ in the Bible

what is written on these gates!" So I read them. On the first gate of Paradise it is written: There is no god except Allah; Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; Ali is a true servant (wali) of Allah; there are means to attain everything, and the means of livelihood are four: contentment, spending on the right cause, renunciation of grudge, and keeping company with the people of righteousness.

On the second gate it is written: There is no god except Allah; Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; Ali is a true servant (wali) of Allah; there are means to attain everything, and the means to attain happiness in the life hereafter are four: rubbing the heads of (I.e., showing kindness to) the orphans, kindness to the widows, the effort to assist the faithful in attaining their objectives, and looking after the poor and the indigent.

On the third gate it is written: There is no god except Allah; Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; Ali is a true servant (wali) of Allah; there are means to attain everything, and the means to attain good health in the short life are four: saying the least, sleeping the least, walking the least, and eating the least.

On the fourth gate it is written: There is no god except Allah; Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; Ali is a true servant (wali) of Allah; whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should be generous to his guest; whoever believes in Allah

and the Last Day ought to be generous to his neighbor; whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day ought to be generous to his parents; whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should either say what is good or remain silent.

On the fifth gate it is written: There is no god except Allah; Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; Ali is a true servant (wali) of Allah; whoever wishes not to be oppressed should not oppress anyone; whoever wishes not to be taunted should not taunt anyone; whoever wishes not to be humiliated should not humiliate anyone; whoever wishes to cling to the firm and reliable nitche in the short life as well as in the life hereafter should testify that: There is no god except Allah; Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; Ali is a true servant (wali) of Allah.

On the sixth gate it is written: There is no god except Allah; Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; Ali is a true servant (wali) of Allah; whoever wishes his grave to be wide and spacious, let him build mosques; whoever wishes the [earth] worms not to consume him in the ground, let him make the mosques his home (١); whoever wishes to remain fresh (٢) , let him sweep the mosques; and whoever wishes to see his place in Paradise, let him cover the mosques' floors with carpets.

On the seventh gate it is written: There is no god except Allah; Muhammad is the Messenger

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١- That is, let him frequent them so often as though he lives in them.

٢- That is, suffering no thirst in this life nor after resurrection when very few will not suffer thirst.

of Allah; Ali is a true servant (wali) of Allah; a pure heart is [attainable] in [the attainment of] four merits: visiting the sick, walking behind borne coffins, buying shrouds (for the dead); and paying the debts back. On the eighth gate it is written: There is no god except Allah; Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; Ali is a true servant (wali) of Allah; whoever wishes to enter these gates should uphold four merits: generosity, good manners, charity, and staying away from harming the servants of Allah.

On the first gate of hell I found three statements written: Whoever places his hope in Allah will be happy; whoever fears Allah (alone) is granted security; a conceited person who is doomed to perdition is the one who does not place his hope on Allah nor does he fear Him. On the second gate is the following writing: If one does not wish to be naked on the Day of Judgment, he should clothe those who are naked in the short life of the world; whoever wishes not to suffer from thirst on the Day of Resurrection should give water to the thirsty to drink during his life in the world; whoever wishes not to come on the Day of Judgment hungry should feed the hungry in the life of the world.

On the third gate it is written: Allah curses the liars; Allah curses those who are miserly; Allah curses the oppressors. On the fourth gate, three statements are written:

Allah humiliates whoever demeans the religion of Islam; Allah humiliates whoever insults Ahl al-Bayt (as); Allah humiliates whoever assists the oppressors in oppressing people. On the fifth gate three statements are written: Do not follow your inclination, for inclinations oppose conviction; do not talk much about that which does not concern you so you will fall from the mercy of Allah; and do not be a helper to the oppressors.

On the sixth gate it is written: I am prohibited from admitting the mujtahids(١); I am prohibited from admitting those who give in charity; I am prohibited from admitting those who fast. On the seventh gate three statements are written: Take account of your deeds before you are accounted for them; rebuke your souls before you are rebuked; and invoke Allah, the most Exalted, the most Great, before you come back to Him and you will not then be able to do so.

Al-Majlisi, on p. ١٣١, Vol. ٨, of his Bihar al-Anwar, quotes p. ٣٩, Vol. ٢, of Al-Khisal, where Ubayy quotes Sa'd quoting al-Barqi quoting his father quoting Ahmed ibn al-Nasr quoting 'Amr ibn Shimr quoting Jabir ibn Abdullah al-Ansari quoting Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) saying, "Think about Allah with the best of your thoughts, and be informed that Paradise has eight gates the width of each one of which is the distance of forty years."

In various sermons of Nahjul Balagha, Imam Ali (as) vividly describes both Paradise and hell; this is a paraphrasing of how he (as) portrays

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١- These are those who attain the degree of ijtihad, the ability to deduct injunctions. See Glossary for explanations of Islamic terms.

:Paradise

The degrees of its bliss and felicity vary a great deal from one person or place to another; its bliss never ends; those who reside in it are never evicted from its premises, nor do they ever get old, and nobody in it is afflicted with misery(۱).They do not brag with one another, nor do they multiply and have offspring(۲).

Nobody enters it except those who are familiar with (and who follow in the footsteps of) the Imams from the progeny of the Prophet (S) and whom they (as) identify (on the Day of Judgment) as such.(۳) If you can ever conceive what may be described for you of it, your soul will turn away from the most alluring of what is in the life of this world of pleasures and temptations and things that please the eyes, and you will be perplexed at how its trees are lined up in rows, and their roots are buried in heaps of musk along its shores.

Its fruits are very easy to reach. Its inhabitants are treated periodically to drinks of pure honey and wines which do not cause intoxication, while such residents are enjoying life in the pavilions of their mansions. Its shade is Allah's 'Arsh; its light is His felicity, and its residents are often visited by His angels(۴).

The best enjoyment the residents of Paradise will appreciate will be nearness to the Almighty and the ability to communicate with Him. He will address them like a host surrounding his guests

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۱- Sermon ۸۵.

۲- Sermon ۱۶۱.

۳- Sermon ۱۵۲.

۴- Sermon ۱۸۳.

with his attention. On p. ١١۴, Vol. ٨, of his Sahih, al-Bukhari quotes Ma'ath ibn Asad quoting Abdullah quoting Malik ibn Anas quoting Zayd ibn Aslam quoting 'Ata ibn Yasar quoting Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him, quoting the Messenger of Allah (S) saying that Allah will address the residents of Paradise and say, "O people "!of Paradise!" and they will answer Him by saying, "Labbayk, Lord! At your Pleasure

Then He will ask them, "Are you contented?" They will answer, "And how could we not be contented while You have given us what You have not given anyone else of Your creation?" Then He will say, "I will give you something even better than that," and they will say, "O Lord! And what is better than that?" He will say, "I shall cause My ".favor to descend upon you and I shall never be displeased with you

The same author, in his chapter on Tawhid, quotes Muhammad ibn Sinan quoting Fulayh quoting Hilal quoting 'Ata ibn Yasar saying that one day the Messenger of Allah (S) happened to be delivering hadith, and a bedouin was present. He (S) said that a bedouin among the people of Paradise once sought permission of his Lord to cultivate the land, whereupon the Almighty asked him, "Haven't you acquired whatever you "?[desire [of the trees and plants of Paradise

He answered by saying, "Yes, but I still like to cultivate the land." The Almighty ,permitted him to do so; therefore

he sowed seeds and within seconds plants grew and ripened and yielded heaps of harvest as high as mountains. It was then that the Almighty said, "Take it, O son of Adam, for nothing satisfies you!" The bedouin said, "O Messenger of Allah! This man must have been either from Quraysh or from the Ansar, for they are farmers whereas .we [bedouins] are not." The Messenger of Allah (S) smiled

Since the love of acquisition and accumulation is instinctive among the descendants of Adam, al-Tirmithi, on pp. ۸۹-۹۰, Vol. ۲, of his Jami', quotes traditions of the Messenger of Allah (S) wherein he informs his companions that the residents of Paradise will be treated periodically to a feast that will remind them of how they used to spend Fridays here on earth, and they will go to a bazaar where each one of them will select .whatever clothes, jewelry, or anything else he likes and take it back to his residence

The "Garden of Eden," that is, jannat 'adan, is referred to in the Holy Qur'an in more than one place. According to Ibn Mas'ud, it is the central part of Paradise. According to al-Dhahhak, it is a city within a city, one in which the messengers, prophets, martyrs, and the Imams of guidance reside surrounded by all others. It mansions are built of jewels, emeralds, sapphires, crysolites, pearls, gold and silver and plated in musk, and, according to Muqatil and al-Kalbi, a wind blows on it from underneath the 'Arsh, immersing

it in white musk. Even Iblis, Satan, envied the humans on account of this Garden of .Eden

On p. ١١٥ of Al-Mahasin, Muhammad ibn Qays quotes Imam Abu Ja’far al-Baqir (as) saying that Iblis the accursed saw prophet Noah (as) once saying his prayers, and he envied him for it. Then he said to him, "O Noah! Allah, the most Exalted One, the most Sublime, planted the trees of the Garden of Eden Himself and built its mansions and let its rivers flow. Then He looked at it and said, ‘The believers are surely the winners! "'.No, by My dignity! No immoral person shall ever reside here

The types of food and drink in Paradise are detailed in the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah, and so are the huris, the women with large lovely eyes who will be the wives of the ?lucky ones, yet one is tempted to ask: What will the residents of Paradise enjoy most

Will it be the drinks, the food, the music played by the branches and leaves of Paradise, or the singing of these huris whose songs, sung individually or in groups, will praise the Almighty and glorify Him? In his Tafsir, al-’Ayyashi, as quoted on p. ١٣٩, Vol. ٨, of Bihar al-Anwar, quotes Abu Baseer quoting Abu Abdullah Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (as) saying, "The residents of Paradise will enjoy neither food nor drink more than ".enjoying sexual intercourse

On pp. ٤٣٨-٤٣٩ of Ali ibn Ibrahim's Tafsir, as quoted on pp. ١٢٠-١٢١, Vol. ٨, of al-Majlisi's Bihar

al-Anwar, it is stated that Ibn Abu ‘Umayr quotes Abu Busayr saying that he once asked Abu Abdullah Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (as) to stir his anxiety about Paradise, whereupon the Imam (as) said, "O Abu Muhammad! Even from the distance of a thousand years can the sweet smell of Paradise be detected, and the most modest residence in Paradise is one where the jinns and humans go; there will they be well .fed, and drinks will be served to them, without diminishing anything thereof

The most modest of the residents of Paradise is one who, upon entering his garden, sees not one but three gardens full of wives, servants, rivers and fruits that fill his eyes and heart with joy. Once he thanks Allah and praises Him, he will be addressed .to raise his head to see the second garden, for it contains what the first does not

So he implores, ‘Lord! I plead to You to grant me this one (instead)!' The Almighty will say to him, ‘If I grant it to you, you may ask Me to give you some other one!' He will say, ‘This one is the one I want, O Lord!' So when he enters it, his pleasure will increase, and he will thank and praise Allah, whereupon its gate is ordered open and he will be told to raise his head. Once the garden of eternity is opened for him, he will see many times as much as he saw before. When his happiness

is multiplied, he will say, 'Praise to You, Lord, a Praise that can never be computed for having granted me gardens and saved me from the fire!'"

At that point, Abu Busayr could not help weeping, yet he asked the Imam (as) to tell him more. Imam al-Baqir (as) said, "O Abu Muhammad! On the edges of the rivers of Paradise are wives waiting for their husbands like trees standing in a row. The moment he picks one of them, another is created for him in her place." Abu Busayr said, "May my life be sacrificed for you! Please do tell me more!" The Imam (as) then said, "A believer is married to eight hundred virgins, four thousand thayyibs (1) and two huris." "Eight hundred virgins?!"

Abu Busayr asked the Imam (as) in amazement. "Yes. Whenever he cohabits with one of them, he always finds her so." "May my life be sacrificed for your sake," said Abu Busayr, "What are the huris created of?" The Imam (as) told the inquirer that they were created of the same heavenly substance of which Paradise is created, then he added, "Her leg can be seen even from behind seventy outfits."

Abu Busayr asked the Imam (as), "May my life be sacrificed for you, do they say anything there?" The Imam (as) said, "Yes, they will say something no human has ever heard." "What is it?" asked Abu Busayr. "They will say: 'We are the eternal ones who never die! We are the blessed

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۱- A thayyib is a deflowered but unmarried woman who may be either a pious widow or a divorcee.

ones, so we never suffer! We are the ones who reside and never depart! We are the ones who are pleased, so we never complain! Congratulations to those who were created for us, and congratulations to those for whom we are created! We are the "'...ones who, were we to hang in the skies, our light would overwhelm all visions

Both Ibn Qawlawayh, as well as al-Majlisi who on p. ١۴٣, Vol. ٨, of his work Bihar al-Anwar, quote Sa'd quoting Ibn 'Eisa quoting Sa'eed ibn Janah quoting Abdullah ibn Muhammad quoting Jabir ibn Yazid quoting Imam Abu Ja'far al-Baqir (as) quoting his forefathers (as) saying that the Messenger of Allah (S) said once, "All prophets are prohibited from entering Paradise before I do, and all nations are prohibited from entering it before those who follow us, we Ahl al-Bayt (as), enter it." The Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) is quoted on p. ١٣٩, Vol. ٨, of Bihar al-Anwar, as saying, "Paradise has seventy-one entrances: my Ahl al-Bayt (as) and followers ".enter through seventy of them, while all other people enter through the other

Other types of enjoyment include pleasures such as no weariness will ever touch the residents of Paradise, nor will they ever suffer any pain whatsoever; they will not need to relieve themselves at all; instead, what they eat comes out of them in the form of sweet-smelling sweat. They will have no chores to perform, nor will they be .denied anything

Their wishes

are granted, and their happiness never ends, nor will they ever be bored. May the Almighty admit us into His Garden by His mercy, for no matter how much good we do, the favor for doing it is His, and only His. He is the One Who creates within us the desire to do good; He is the One Who enables us to do good deeds, and He is the One Who, nevertheless, rewards us for doing them, though we would not have been able .to do them on our own. He is the source of all good. He is all goodness

Finally, one is tempted to ask how Paradise as a whole may be conceived. The discussion of jannat 'adan above suggests that it is quite likely it is circular with the Garden (or Gardens) of Eden being in the very center surrounded by the gardens of those who were close in lineage and deeds to the Prophet of Islam (S), namely Ahl al-.Bayt (as), surrounded by those who were loyal to them in word and in deed, and so on

The further one goes from the central point, the less his status will be, and the less his degree of bliss. The circle has always symbolized eternity. The Garden may very likely .be circular, and surely Allah knows best

A Description of Hell (۲

Muslims observe the fast so that they may be spared the torment of hell. What kind of place is hell, and what sort of torment? Books have been written discussing only

this subject. The Holy Qur'an contains vivid descriptions of the psychological and physical torture awaiting those who did not live up to what the Almighty had expected of them, who did not honor the trust whereby He entrusted them, and who did not .carry out the goal for which He created them, that is, to worship Him, and Him alone

Qur'anic references to such torment may be reviewed in Surahs such as these: al-Baqarah, Aali-'Imran, al-Maaida, al-An'am, al-A'raf, al-Anfal, Younus, Hud, al-Ra'd, al-Hijr, al-Nahl, Maryam, Taha, al-Hajj, al-Muminoon, al-Noor, al-Furqan, al-'Ankabut, Luqman, al-Sajdah, al-Ahzab, Saba, al-Zumar, Ghafir, al-Tur, al-Hashr, al-Ma'arij, al-Buruj, al-Fajr, al-Nisaa..., in most Surahs, as a matter of fact, for the Holy Qur'an was revealed to warn humans against the fire of hell and to attract them .to the eternal bliss and happiness: to a kingdom that never diminishes

:What physical shape does hell take? Let us review these Qur'anic verses

As for) those who disbelieve in Our Signs, they are the people of the left hand. On) (them is fire closed over. (Holy Qur'an, ٩٠:١٩-٢٠

Closed over" means capped; hell may be compared to a pot, with a lid, on an oven, a" pot which is burning both inside and out. The meaning becomes more clear when we :recite these verses

And what will make you realize what the crushing disaster is? It is the fire kindled by Allah, (a fire) which rises above the hearts. Surely it shall be closed over them, in (extended columns. (Holy Qur'an, ١٠۴:۵-٩

"Closed over them"

conveys the same meaning as in ٩٠:٢٠ above. And its columns may be indicative of its depth, hence such columns are "extended," quite lengthy, and Allah knows best. How :large are its sparks? The answer is provided by its Creator and ours

.(Surely it sends up sparks like palaces" (Holy Qur'an, ٧٧:٣٢"

Since references to hell abound throughout the Holy Qur'an, we ought to stop here to review some traditions of the Messenger of Allah (S) and the Imams (as) describing the horrors of the place called hell, a place as intense in heat as it is in chillness, a place whose fire is fed by sulphur pieces each one of which is as large as the largest of .the earth's mountains

Equally large are the areas where those being tormented are taken to be chilled after being charred by its fire. In other words, they are taken from one extreme to another. There are on our planet ice mountains as well as volcanoes spewing rivers of molten .or fluid rocks as lava; so is the case with hell: it contains both heat and chilliness

On p. ٣٠٩ of Ibrahim al-Selek's book The Divine Traditions, a compilation of Qudsi ahadith, the Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that hell complained to its Lord saying, "O Lord! [Even] my parts are consuming one another!" whereupon the Almighty permitted it to take two breaths, one in the winter and one in the summer, hence the severe heat of the summer and the bitter cold

of the winter. Had it been permitted to take more than two, no life would have .become possible on earth

While the lucky ones are enjoying the fruits of Paradise, the residents of hell will be eating thorn-like "food" that will reach their throats and halt there; it neither reaches their stomachs, nor does it enable them to vomit. This is one of the foods on hell's "menu." Another type is prepared for them from the pus of the wounds of those being .tortured in hell, then boiled to a degree that will split their bowels

The Prophet of Islam (S) is quoted on p. ۱۴۵, Vol. ۱, of al-Zamakhshari's Rabee' al-Abrar as having asked archangel Gabriel (as), "Why have I never seen [archangel] Michael smiling?" Gabriel (as) answered, "Michael never smiled since hell was created." Anas, may Allah be merciful to his soul, is quoted by al-Zamakhshari saying that the least degree of torture in hell are two pairs of shoes made for someone in it from the heat of which his brain boils. More details about this horrific place are :excerpted from al-Zamakhshari thus

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said, "During my night journey (israa), I heard a huge noise, so I asked Gabriel, 'What is this huge noise, O Gabriel?' He (Gabriel) said, 'It is a rock thrown from the tip of hell into it, and it has been falling for the past seventy Autumns, and it has now reached its bottom." Abu 'Asim 'Ubayd ibn 'Umayr ibn Qatadah

al-Laythi, Mecca's judge (d. ۶۸ A.H.), has said, "Hell exhales one exhalation because of which all angels and prophets tremble, so much so that even Ibrahim (Abraham) (as) "'!kneels down and says, 'Lord! I plead to You to only spare me

Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri is quoted saying, "If a mountain is hit with one of the clubs used by the angels charged with hell, it will be fragmented into bits and turned into dust." Tawoos ibn Keesan al-Khawlani is quoted saying, "When hell was created, the angels became extremely frightened, and when you (humans) were created, they became ".calm

Al-Hasan ibn Yasar al-Basir has said, "By Allah! None among the servants of Allah can withstand its heat! It has been said to us that if a man stands in the east and hell in the west, and if it is partially uncovered for him, his skull will boil. Had a bucket of its pus been dropped on earth, not a single living being would have remained alive." Hisham ibn al-Hassan al-Dastoo 'I used not to put out his lamp at night. His family objected and said to him, "We cannot tell when it is daytime and when it is nighttime!" He said, "By Allah! If I put the lamp out, I will remember the darkness of the grave, and no ".sleep can then overcome me

Punishment in hell will be according to the type or types of sins committed during the life of this world. For example, those who treasured their

money and were negligent about taking out their zakat and other religious taxes will be burned with what they had treasured on their foreheads, on their sides, and on their backs. In other words, on most of their bodies. Abu Tharr al-Ghifari, may Allah be pleased with him, used to say, "Tell those who treasure their wealth that they will be burnt therewith on their foreheads, on their sides, and on their backs till they are filled ".with fire

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said, as we are told on p. ٢۴٣, Vol. ٨, of Bihar al-Anwar, "No servant of Allah who has wealth and who does not pay its due zakat except that he will be burnt with metal pieces heated in the fire of hell whereby his forehead and sides and back are ironed till Allah finishes trying His servants on a Day the duration of which is a thousand years of your own calculation. Then he will see his way, either to Paradise, or to hell." Abu Umamah quotes the Messenger of Allah (S) explaining the type of drink given to the residents of hell. Says he, "It will be brought to him, and he will hate it; when it is brought close to him, it will burn his face and his skull will fall off. ".If he drinks of it, it will tear his intestines to pieces till it comes out of his anus

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying, "The prayers of

one who drinks wine will not be accepted for forty days; so, if he dies and his stomach has some of it, it will be incumbent on Allah to make him drink of sadeed, a liquid that comes out of the vaginas of adultresses which will be collected in cauldrons in hell to ".give to them, so it will incinerate their stomachs and skins

This tradition has been narrated by Shu'ayb ibn Waqid who quotes al-Husayn ibn Zayd who quotes Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) as indicated on p. ۲۴۴, Vol. ۸, of Bihar al-Anwar. Those guilty of sins other than adultery or fornication will be given a drink of lead and molten brass, as Ibn Mas'ud is quoted in Bihar al-Anwar as saying. Mujahid says it will be the pus and blood of those being tormented, while Ibn Jubayr says it is black water; since hell is black, its water is black, its trees are black, and the faces and .bodies of its residents are charred black. This view is held by al-Dhahhak

Additional torture methods in hell include snakes and scorpions whose fangs, as Ibn 'Abbas and others narrate, are as huge and as tall as palm trees. The snakes will be as thick as elephants, and the scorpions will be as large as black mules. And the inmates of hell will often be beaten with huge clubs: if they are in the high levels of hell, the blows will cause them to fall into the other layers, each more

.intense in heat than the other, for seventy years

Once they reach its bottom, its flame will push them back, and so on. There will be no moment of respite for them in it. Which is the very worst area of hell? Ibn Mas’ud and Ibn ‘Abbas are quoted on pp. ۲۴۱-۲۴۲, Vol. ۸, of al-Majlisi's Bihar al-Anwar saying that hypocrites will be lodged in the lowest level of hell where the torment is the most severe. Closed fire boxes, like ovens, are their torture chambers.

Let us now return to Nahjul Balagha to see how Imam Ali (as) paints for us the following graphic description of hell, may Allah never permit it to touch us:

The worst calamity is when someone falls into the pit of hell; he will feel as if he is being boiled alive therein, and he will find it a never-ending torment, a creature of some sort that snorts and exhales, giving its residents no respite at all, nor does it ever afford them a moment of rest, nor can they ever be shielded from its torment by any power or any sure death. There is no brief slumber in it, nor any interval between its successive waves of torture: an ever-recurring pain from which we seek Allah's help.(۱)

It surely is the very worst of all places, a place where the hands of its inhabitants are tied to their necks, and their foreheads are chained to their feet, and their clothing is made of sheets of

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۱- Sermon ۸۳.

tar. Their shirts are made of fire, while their torment is a never-ending fire in a place the door of which is capped over its people, in a raging fire the very noise of which is deafening, the sparks of which crackle and there is no freedom from it nor a period (for its expiration, nor does it put an end to the people in it to finish them(۱

Its heat is intense, its bottom is distant, its "ornament" is iron, its drink is pus.(۲) On the Day of Judgment, the unjust imam will be brought without having anyone to help him or find an excuse for him, so he will be hurled into the fire of hell where he will turn with it just as a grinding mill turns, till he collides with its deepest depth headlong.(۳) If Malik (custodian of hell) becomes angry, he causes its parts to crush one another, and (if he rebukes it, its gates fly up and down (and spit like volcanoes).(۴

Reference to hell being brought from one place to another suggests beyond the shadow of doubt that distances, places, and spaces are a matter of reality in the life to come as they are in our worldly life. A testimony to hell being brought, that is, being moved or transferred from one location to another, exists in verse ۲۳ of Surat al-Fajr :((Chapter ۸۹

And hell, that Day, is brought (to face all humans); on that Day will man remember," but how

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.Sermon ۱۰۹ -۱

.Sermon ۱۲۰ -۲

.Sermon ۱۶۴ -۳

.Sermon ۱۸۳ -۴

(will that remembrance benefit him?" (Holy Qur'an, ۸۹:۲۳

and in nUmarous other Qur'anic verses. Of course those who will move hell from one place to another will be none other than the angels whom we cannot see in this life but whom we will see the moment we die, but let us save the discussion of this most .fascinating subject of angels to another book, Insha-Allah

Remember that all these portraits of hell do not include the horrors resulting from being in the company of devils, demons, and condemned jinns who will all share hell with condemned humans. A look cast any of these creatures being tortured, their shrieks, their unsightly parts being pulled out of their places, and their skins being peeled off their flesh... may be as terrifying as hell itself. Remember how Allah described mankind as being created in the best form. Humans condemned to hell will realize this fact more than others, while the blessed will be spared such horrifying .realization

Those who read the story of Saint Joan of Arc (۱۴۱۲ - ۱۴۳۱), the French heroine who, despite her tender age, led French armies to victory over the English at Orleans, remember her saying that she saw once a demon, and that she would prefer to walk on burning timbers from one end of the earth to the other rather than seeing it again. ...Imagine being in the company of such demons for eternity

Such is hell, and such is its torment. Had we had a glance

at it, or even at some of its inhabitants, we would not have minded having to fast each and every day of our life, not only during the month of Ramadhan, the month of Allah, .the month of forgiveness and mercy, but all our life

When Fast is Prohibited

:There are certain occasions when fast becomes unlawful; these are

.(Fasting the first day of the month of Shawwal (Eidul-Fitr (١

.(Fasting the tenth day of the month of Thul-Hijjah (Eidul-Adha (٢

Fasting the eleventh and twelfth of Thul-Hijjh by anyone, pilgrim or non-pilgrim, (٣ .who is then present at Mina

Fast which is not required, such as that of the sick, the woman during her menstrual (۴ or post-natal (after having delivered) period, or fasting for a transgression committed (such as fasting to thank Allah for having been able to kill another Muslim), and the fast of one on a journey except if such person seeks the fulfillment of a dear and .lawful worldly wish and goes to visit the Prophet's shrine in Medina

.Fasting with the intention to prolong his fast till beyond sunset (۵

Fast of silence with the intention of hoping to seek nearness to Allah. Such fast was (۶ granted to a few holy men and women after the latter sought and obtained permission from the Almighty such as the case of Zakariyya (as) and Maryam mother .(of Jesus (as

The fast of doubt: if one is not sure whether the day he is fasting is part of the (٧ month of Sha’ban or that of

.the month of Ramadhan

.The fast of a wife who deliberately goes against her husband's wish not to fast (٨

Some Muslims, particularly Shi’as, may disagree with some of these eight items depending on who they follow as their marji’ taqlid. When in doubt, ask your marji’ or .his representative, and Allah knows best

It is the Month of the Holy Qur’an

The month of Ramadhan is sacred because it is the month when the Holy Qur'an was revealed, and because it is the month containing Lailatul-Qadr. It is, therefore, appropriate to know a little about this Book, the greatest of all divine revelations, the .best revelation the descendants of Adam (as) have ever received from their Lord

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted on p. ٢۶١, Vol. ٢, of al-Zamakhshari's Rabee’ al-Abrar as saying, "Allah Almighty read Surats Ta-Ha and Ya-Sin a thousand years before creating Adam, and when the angels heard it, they said, ‘Congratulations to those to whom such speech is revealed, and congratulations to the hearts that "'.memorize it, and congratulations to the tongues that articulate it

In the same reference, the Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying, "The hearts rust just as iron rusts." He (S) was asked, "O Messenger of Allah! What removes their rust?" He (S) said, "The recitation of the Qur'an and the remembrance of death." In one Qudsi hadith, the Almighty has said, "I shall give one who is too preoccupied with his recitation of the Qur'an to plead to Me the very best of what I give those

".who are grateful to Me

Imam Ali (as) has said, "One who recites the Qur'an while standing during the prayers will receive a hundred good deeds for each verse he recites; if he recites it sitting during his prayers, he will receive fifty good deeds for each verse, and whoever recites it after having made his wudu will receive twenty-five good deeds for each verse, and one who recites it without wudu will receive ten good deeds for each verse he recites." One day, as al-Zamakhshari tells us on p. ۲۶۴, Vol. ۲, of his Rabee' al-Abrar, the Messenger of Allah (S) was late in going back home. "What kept you so long from .coming home?" Ayesha asked him

He (S) said, "It is the recitation of a man whose voice is better (when reciting the Holy Qur'an) than anyone else I have heard." Then he (S) stood and listened to him for a good while then said, "He is Salim, a slave of Abu Huthayfah. Praise to Allah for the ".presence of people like him in my nation

During the month of Ramadhan, Sufyan al-Thawri used to devote his time to the recitation of the Holy Qur'an, and Malik ibn Anas used to stop studying and researching hadith, abandon the company of scholars, and concentrate on reciting the Holy Qur'an instead, as we are told on pp. ۲۵۷-۲۵۸ of Vol. ۲ of al-Zamakhshari's Rabi' al-Abrar. In one of his sermons, Imam Ali (as) said the following about the Holy

:Qur'an

Besides the Holy Qur'an, nobody should complain of needing anything else. One who is deprived of it cannot be described as having anything at all; so, seek in it the healing of your ailments, and solicit its assistance when you encounter a hardship, for it contains a cure for the worst of ailments: disbelief, hypocrisy, and misguidance. Plead to Allah through it instead of pleading to any of His creation. Nobody can seek Allah through anything better than it, and be admonished that it is an intercessor that will .intercede on your behalf, and a speaker that speaks the truth

For whomsoever the Holy Qur'an intercedes on the Day of Judgment, he will surely achieve intercession, and whoever seeks it to testify to his truthfulness will surely be regarded as a man of truth, for someone shall call on the Day of Judgment: "Everyone who cultivates is tried by what he cultivates except those who cultivate the Qur'an;" so be among those who cultivate and follow it, and make it the means to reach your Lord. Seek its advice regarding your souls, and compare your views with those of its (own, and seek its help against yielding to your desires.(١

The Imam (as) has also said, "One who recites the Qur'an then dies and enters the ".fire is among those who took Allah's signs lightly

Rewards of Reciting Chapters from the Holy Qur'an

point

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as), as we are told by Shaykh Taqi al-Deen Ibrahim ibn Ali ibn al-Hassan ibn Muhammad ibn Salih al-'Amili-al-Kaf'ami, has made

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.Rabee` al-Abrar fee Nusoos al-Akhbar, pp. ٢٥٨-٢٥٩ -١

the following statement with regard to the merits of reciting chapters and verses of :the Holy Qur'an

One who recites ten verses in one night will never be written down among the indifferent. One who recites fifty verses will be written down among those who remember Allah often (I.e., thakireen). If he recites a hundred, he will be written down among those who constantly supplicate (qaniteen). If he recites three hundred, he will .(be written down among the winners (faaizeen

If he recites five hundred verses, he will be written down among those who reach the degree of ijtihad (mujtahideen). And if one recites a thousand verses, he will be rewarded with one kantar which is five thousand mithqals: each mithqal is twenty-four karats the smallest of which [in as far as the weighing in the hereafter is concerned] is as big as the mountain of Uhud, and the largest extends from the earth (to the sky.(١

The Imam (as) has also said, as quoted in the same reference, "If one recites the Qur'an, Allah will let him enjoy his vision, and such recitation decreases the penalty of his parents even if they may be kafirs (apostates)." Imagine, dear reader, what it ...does to your parents who raised you as a Muslim

The reader is requested to refer to what is indicated early in this book with reference to who Imam al-Sadiq (as) was, what his source of information was, and what relation ,he had had with the Messenger of Allah (S). We

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.Misbah al-Kaf`ami, Vol. ٢, p. ٥٣١ -١

however, would like to add one more statement made by this great Imam (as) that sheds light on his narration of hadith, since we all know that hadith is the second source of the Sunnah, the Holy Qur'an being the first. Imam al-Sadiq (as) has said:

My hadith is the same as my father's, while my father's hadith is the same as my grandfather's, and the hadith of my grandather is similar to that of al-Husayn (as); al-Husayn's hadith is the same as that of al-Hasan; al-Hasan's hadith is similar to that of the Commander of the Faithful (as); the hadith of the Commander of the Faithful (as) is the same hadith of the Messenger of Allah (S), and the hadith of the Messenger of Allah (S) is the speech of Allah, the Lord of Dignity and Greatness.(۱)

From the viewpoint of Muslims who believe in and follow the fiqh of Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as), whatever he said was the echo of what his great grandfather the Messenger of Allah (S) had said. He is one of twelve Imams followed by Ja'fari Shi'as and who the latter believe are divinely inspired; they are the Imams of Ahl al-Bayt (as) referred to in verse ۳۳ of Surat al-Ahzab (Chapter ۳۳).

The fact that their number is twelve and that all of them descended from Quraysh is stated in the Sahih books of our Sunni brethren. This is what al-Bukhari and Muslims, as well as many others, have confirmed. Some Sunni references indicate that

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۱- This statement is recorded on p. ۵۳, Vol. ۱, of al-Kulayni's book Al-Kafi.

the Prophet (S) named all of them, saying that the first was Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) followed by his son al-Hasan (as) then al-Hasan's brother al-Husayn (as), followed by .(nine from the offspring of al-Husayn (as) the last of whom is al-Mahdi (as

The Sunni Hanafi author of Yanabee' al-Mawaddah narrates an incident in his book as :follows

A Jew named al-A'tal came to the Prophet (S) and said, "Muhammad! I wish to ask you about certain things which I have been keeping to myself; so, if you answer them, I shall declare my acceptance of Islam before you." The Prophet (S) said, "Ask me, O "!father of Imarah

So he asked him about many things till he was satisfied and admitted that the Prophet (S) was right. Then he said, "Tell me about your wasi (successor): who is he? No prophet can ever be without a wasi, and our prophet Moses (as) had appointed Yusha' [Joshua] son of Noon as his successor." He (S) said, "My wasi is Ali ibn Abu Talib followed by my grandsons al-Hasan and al-Husayn followed by nine men from the ".loins of al-Husayn

He said, "Then name them for me, O Muhammad!" The Prophet (S) said, "Once al-Husayn departs, he will be followed by his son Ali; when Ali departs, his son Muhammad will succeed him. When Muhammad departs, his son Ja'far will follow him. When Ja'far departs, he will be followed by his son Mousa. When Mousa departs, his .son Ali will succeed him

When Ali departs, his son Muhammad will succeed him. When Muhammad departs, his son al-Hujjah Muhammad al-Mahdi will succeed him. These are the twelve ones." (So that Jew embraced Islam and praised Allah for having guided him.(١)

If we wish to turn the pages of Shi'a books and discern the facts they contain with regard to this subject, we will surely find many times as many ahadith as this one, but this suffices to prove that Sunni scholars do admit that the number of the Imams (as) is twelve, and there are no such Imams besides Ali (as) and his purified offspring.

What strengthens our conviction that the Twelve Imams from Ahl al-Bayt (as) were never tutored by any of the Ummah's scholars is the fact that no historian, nor any traditionist, nor any biographer, has ever indicated that one of the Imams from Ahl al-Bayt (as) learned what he knew from some sahaba or tabi'een as is the case with all the Ummah's scholars and Imams.

Abu Haneefah, for example, was a student of Imam Ja'far-al-Sadiq (as); Malik was a student of Abu Haneefah; al-Shafi'I learned from Malik and so did Ahmed ibn Hanbal. As regarding the Imams from Ahl al-Bayt (as), their knowledge is gifted by Allah, Glory and Exaltation to Him, and they inherit such knowledge son from father, for they are the ones to whom the Almighty specifically refers when He says,

"Then We gave the Book for an inheritance to those whom We chose from among Our servants"

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١ - This is recorded on p. ۴۴٠ of al-Hafiz al-Qandoozi al-Hanafi's book Yanabi` al-Mawaddah and also by al-Hamawayni in his book Faraid al-Simtain wherein he relies on the authority of Mujahid who quotes Ibn Abbas.

.(Holy Qur'an, Surah Fatir ۳۵:۳۲)

This much ought to convince the discreet reader that the information stated in this .section is taken from a very reliable source

The Basmala

Whenever we recite a verse from the Holy Qur'an, we start with the Basmala, that is: Bismillahir-Rahmanir-Rahim, In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the most Merciful. In the Fatiha, the first chapter of the Holy Qur'an, this Basmala is a verse all by itself, whereas in all other chapters, with the exception of Bara'ah or Tawbah .where it is not recited, it serves as an introduction to other verses

On pp. ۳۹-۴۰, Vol. ۱, of his Tafsir, al-Qummi chronologically arranges the isnad of one particular statement made by Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) and recounts the longest list of narrators we have ever come across. The list of narrators ends with Abu Busayr, a well-known companion of this great Imam (as), saying that he once asked Imam al-Sadiq (as) about the tafsir of Bismillahir-Rahmanir-Rahim, so he said, and we would :like to quote his statement as well as its isnad in its original text as follows

After the long list of the said narrators, the Imam (as) indicates the derivation of each :letter of the Basmala as follows

The "ba" is derived from "baha-Allah," the Splendor of Allah; the "seen" is derived from "sanna-Allah," the Majesty of Allah; the "meem" is derived from "mulk-Allah," the Kingdom of Allah; "Allah" is the God of everything; "al-Rahman" is the One Who is "Merciful to all His creation; "al-Rahim

is the One Who singles out those who believe in Him to receive the greatest share of .His mercy

On p. ۵۰۶ of Misbah al-Kaf'ami, the Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that when a teacher teaching a child to recite the Holy Qur'an tells the child to recite "Bismillahir-Rahmanir-Rahim," and the child recites it, Allah will decree a clearance for the child, for his parents, and for the teacher, from hell, and that it is comprised of nineteen letters, the same number corresponding to the number of the keepers of the gates of hell; therefore, whoever pronounces it, Allah will permit these letters to close the .gates of hell against him

Now let us research and find out how each of the ۱۱۴ chapters of the Holy Qur'an stands out among the rest, and what rewards the faithful will Insha-Allah receive from the most Generous One for reciting it. Following is a translation from the Arabic of most of the original text on pp. ۵۰۶-۵۴۲ of Vol. ۲ of Misbah al-Kaf'ami by Shaykh Taqi al-Deen Ibrahim ibn Ali ibn al-Hassan ibn Muhammad ibn Salih al-'Amili al-Kaf'ami, in .addition to selected texts included in Vol. ۸۹ of al-Majlisi's Bihar al-Anwar

(Chapter ۱ (al–Fatiha

Al-Tibrisi, in his exegesis Mujma'ul-Bayan fee Tafsir al-Qur'an, provides ten names :for the first chapter of the Holy Qur'an, namely Surat al-Fatiha

al-Fatiha, the one that opens, for it is like a gate: when opened, it leads one to the (۱ ;Book of Allah

al-Hamd, the praise, for its verses are (۲

;clearly praising the Almighty

Ummul-Kitab, the mother of the Book, for its status is superior to all other chapters (٣
;of the Holy Qur'an, or like the war standard: it is always in the forefront

al-Sab’, the seven verses, for it is comprised of seven verses and the only one (۴
whose verses are seven, and there is no room here to elaborate on the merits of the
;number ٧ especially since most readers of this book are already aware of such merits

al-Mathani, the oft-repeated Chapter, for no other Chapter of the Holy Qur'an is (۵
;repeated as often as this one

al-Kafiya, the chapter that suffices and that has no substitute; you simply cannot (۶
replace its recitation with that of any other chapter of the Holy Qur'an in the first two
;rek’ats of the prayers, whereas it can substitute others

al-Asas, the basis or foundation or bed-rock, a connotation of its being the (٧
foundation upon which the Holy Qur'an stands just as the Basmala ("Bismillahir-
;Rahmanir-Rahim") is the foundation of the Fatiha

al-Shifa, the healing, due to the fact that the Messenger of Allah (S) has said that (٨
the Fatiha heals from all ailments except death; and

al-Salat, the prayers, or the basic requirement of the daily prayers, one without the (٩
recitation of which no prayer can be accepted, especially since the Prophet (S) has
quoted the Almighty saying, "The prayers have been divided between Me and My
servant: one half for Me, and one

for him;" so when one recites it and says, "Alhamdu lillahi Rabbil-'Alameen," the Almighty says, "My servant has praised Me." And when he says, "Arrahmanir-Raheem," the Almighty says, "My servant has praised Me." And when he says, "Maliki Yawmid-Deen," Allah says, "My servant has exalted Me." And when he says, "Iyyaka Na'budu wa iyyaka nasta'een," Allah will say, "This is a covenant between Me and My servant, and My servant shall be granted the fulfillment of his pleas." Then if he finishes reciting the Fatiha to the end, Allah will again confirm His promise by saying, "This is for [the benefit of] My servant, and My servant will be granted the answer to ".his wishes

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted by Abu Ali al-Fadl ibn al-Hassan ibn al-Fadl al-Tibrisi, may Allah have mercy on his soul, saying that one who recites al-Fatiha will be regarded by the Almighty as though he recited two-thirds of the Holy Qur'an and as though he gave by way of charity to each and every believing man and woman. "By the One in Whose hand my soul is," the Prophet (S) continues, "Allah Almighty did not reveal in the Torah, the Gospel, or the Psalms any chapter like it; it is the Mother of the Book and al-Sab' al-Mathani (the oft-repeated seven verses), and it is divided between Allah and His servant, and His servant shall get whatever he asks; it is the best Sura in the Book of the most Exalted One, and

it is a healing from every ailment except poison, which is death." He (S) is also quoted ,by al-Kaf'ami as saying

He (Allah) bestowed it upon me as His blessing, making it equivalent to the Holy" Qur'an, saying, 'And We have granted you al-Sab' al-Mathani and the Great Qur'an '.((Qur'an Surah al-Hijr, ۱۵:۸۷

It is the most precious among the treasures of the 'Arsh." Indeed, Allah, the most Sublime, has chosen Muhammad (S) alone to be honored by it without doing so to any other Prophet or Messenger of His with the exception of Sulayman (Solomon), peace be upon him, who was granted the Basmala (see verse ۳۰ of Surat al-Naml, Chapter of .(the Ant

One who recites it, being fully convinced of his following in the footsteps of Muhammad (S) and his Progeny (as), adhering to its injunctions, believing in its outward and inward meanings, will be granted by Allah for each of its letters a blessing better than what all there is in the world of wealth and good things, and whoever listens to someone reciting it will receive one third of the rewards due to its .reciter

(Chapter ۲ (al-Baqarah

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted by Ubayy saying, "Whoever recites it will receive blessings from Allah and His mercy and will be granted the rewards due to one who camps for a full year, in the way of Allah, as a soldier on the borders of the Islamic domains to protect them, being constantly on vigil." Then the Messenger

of Allah (S) turned to the narrator, Ubayy, and said, "O Ubayy! Order the Muslims to learn it, for learning it is a blessing, while leaving it is a loss, and no magician can ever ".overpower it

He (S) is also quoted saying that everything has a zenith, and the zenith of the Qur'an is Surat al-Baqarah. "Which ayat (verse)," he (S) was asked, "in it is the best, O Messenger of Allah?" He (S) said, "Ayat al-Kursi [۲:۲۵۵]," he (S) answered. And he (S) entrusted the youngest among his companions, namely al-Harith ibn Zayd ibn al-Harithah, due to the fact that he knew Surat al-Baqarah by heart, to command an .army to defend Islam

(Chapter ۳ (Aali-'Imran

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that one who recites it will be given for each of its verses security on the bridge over hell, and whoever recites it on Friday will be blessed by Allah and His angels all day long till sunset. He (S) is also quoted saying, "Memorize Surat al-Baqarah and Surat Aali-'Imran, for they are like two fragrant flowers, and they will shade the one who learns them by heart on the Day of Judgment like two clouds..." to shade those who used to recite them quite often from .the intense heat of that Day

(Chapter ۴ (al-Nisaa

He (S) is also quoted saying that one who recites it will be regarded by the Almighty as though he were charitable to all orphans, and he will be granted rewards due to one who emancipates

a person who dissociates himself from shirk and who, by the will of Allah, is forgiven." Imam Ali (as) is quoted saying that whoever recites it every Friday will be secure from .the constriction of the grave

(Chapter ۵ (al–Maida

Imam Ali (as) is also quoted saying that whoever recites it will be given ten good deeds, and ten of his sins will be forgiven, and his status will be elevated by ten degrees for each and every Jew and Christian alive. (This may be due to the fact that this Qur'anic chapter discusses Judaism and Christianity in great detail). Imam-al-Sadiq (as) says that one who recites it on every Thursday will not mix his belief with .any oppression, nor will he ever commit shirk

(Chapter ۶ (al–An'am

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that this Chapter was revealed as a whole escorted by seventy thousand angels praising and glorifying the Almighty in unison; so, whoever recites it will be blessed by those same seventy thousand angels for a full day and night. Imam al-Rida (as) is quoted saying that those angels will keep blessing .him till the Day of Judgment

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said, "One who recites it from its beginning till the verse saying, 'And thus do We make some oppressors befriend others on account of what they earned (۶:۱۲۹),' Allah will assign for him forty thousand angels to write for him (in his book of good deeds) the like of their own adoration till the Day of ".Resurrection

According to the

author of Al-Afrad wal Gharaib, one who does the same after having performed the fajr prayers, forty angels will descend for him, and it will be recorded for him the like of their adoration. According to the author of Al-Waseet, if one does so upon waking up, Allah Almighty will assign for him a thousand angels to protect him and to record .for him the like of their deeds (of adoration) till the Day of Judgment

(Chapter ٧ (al-A'raf

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that if one recites this chapter, Allah, the most Exalted One, will install a protective veil between him and Iblis, and Adam (as) will seek intercession for him on the Day of Judgment. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying that one who reads it every month will be among those who shall have no fear on the Day of Judgment, nor shall they grieve; so, if he recites it every Friday, .he will be among those who will not be tried on the Day of Judgment

(Chapter ٨ (al-Anfal

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying, "If someone recites both Surat al-Anfal and Bara'ah together, I shall seek intercession for him and testify for him on the Day of Judgment that he is free from hypocrisy, and he will be granted of the rewards ten times as many as the number of hypocritical men and women in the world, and ten of his sins will be wiped out, and his status will be elevated by ten degrees, and the

".Arsh and those (angels) that bear it shall bless him as long as he lives'

Imam al-Sadiq (as) has said, "One who recites both of these chapters every month will not undergo any hypocrisy, and he will be as a true Shi'a of the Commander of the Faithful (as) and will be eating on the Day of Judgment of the tables of Paradise with ".them till Allah, the most Exalted One, is through with the Judgment

(Chapter ۹ (Bara'ah

Its merits are similar to those of Surat al-Anfal above. In a footnote regarding this Chapter, al-Kaf'ami explains that "Bara'ah" (which means clearance or dissociation or a separation from) means: dissociation (of the infidels) from Ali (as); the Basmala was not included at its beginning, as is the case with all other Chapters of the Holy Qur'an, simply because the Basmala connotes security and mercy, whereas Bara'ah was .revealed to lift such security and to warn of confrontation

:This chapter, al-Kaf'ami goes on, has ten names

۱) "Bara'ah," after the first word in it;

۲) "Tawbah," due to the repentance to which it refers within its text;

۳) "Faziha," the revealer, unveiler, or announcer, for it unveils and reveals the truth about and announces the hypocrisy of those hypocrites about whom it informs us;

۴) "Muba'thira," scatterer, because it scatters and displays to everyone the hidden secrets of those hypocrites;

۵) "Muqashqisha," a chapter that cures or heals or clears those who believe in it of hypocrisy and polytheism due to the supplication and sincerity

;it contains

Bahooth," investigator or researcher or seeker, because it looks for the hypocrites'" (۶
;secret schemes

;Mudamdima," annihilator, because it annihilates hypocrisy and hypocrites" (۷

Hafira," excavator or digger: it dug up the hearts of the hypocrites and unveiled" (۸
;what they were hiding

Mubashshira," bearer of glad tidings: By making public the abominations and ugly" (۹
schemes of those hypocrites, it brought glad tidings to those who were not among
;them, and

Athab," torment or torture, because of repeatedly referring to the torment" (۱۰
.awaiting those hypocrites and all others like them

(Chapter ۱۰ (Younus

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that one who recites this chapter will be given ten good deeds for each and everyone who believed in prophet Younus (as) as well as for those who disbelieved in him and who were drowned with Pharaoh. Imam al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying that whoever recites it once a month will not be among the ignorant ones and will instead be on the Day of Judgment among those near to .the Almighty

(Chapter ۱۱ (Hud

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that one who recites this chapter will be granted of the rewards ten good deeds for the number of each person who believed in prophet Noah (as) and who disbelieved in him and in prophets Hud, Salih, Shu'ayb, Lot, Ibrahim and Musa (Moses), peace be upon all of them, and he will be on the Day of Judgment among the happy ones. Imam al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying that anyone

who recites it every Friday will be resurrected on the Day of Judgment among the group that will include the prophets, peace be upon all of them, and he will receive an .easy trial and no sin will be recorded against him

(Chapter ۱۲ (Yousuf

About this chapter, Imam al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying, "Let your slaves memorize it, for whoever teaches it to his slaves and those whose right hand possesses will die an easy death, and he will be empowered to the extent that he will envy no other Muslim at all." The Imam (as) is also quoted saying that whoever recites it every day or every night will be resurrected on the Day of Judgment with beauty similar to that of Yousuf, peace be upon him, and he will not be affected by the great terror of the Day of .Judgment and will be among the best of Allah's servants

(Chapter ۱۳ (al-Ra'd

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that one who recites this chapter will be rewarded with rewards as many as the clouds that passed away as well as those that will pass till the Day of Judgment, and he will be on the Day of Judgment among those who fulfilled their covenant with Allah. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) is also quoted saying that one who recites this chapter quite often will never be hit by lightning and will be admitted into Paradise without reckoning, and he will be granted the right to intercede on behalf of all those of his

.family and brethren whom he knows

(Chapter ۱۴ (Ibrahim

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that a person who recites this chapter will be rewarded with ten good deeds for each and everyone who worshipped the idols and who did not worship them. Imam al-Sadiq (as) has also said that one who recites both this chapter and the next one (al-Hijr) during an optional prayers of two rek'ats every Friday will never be impoverished, nor will he suffer insanity nor any calamity .whatsoever

(Chapter ۱۵ (al-Hijr

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that one who recites this chapter will receive ten good deeds for the number of each Muhajir (immigrant from Medina) and Ansar .((Medenite supporter) and the number of those who ridiculed the Prophet (S

(Chapter ۱۶ (al-Nahl

The Messenger of Allah (S) says that one who recites this chapter will not be tried by Allah with regard to what blessings He had bestowed upon him during the life of this world, and if he dies that day or night, he will be granted rewards equivalent to those due to whoever dies after having left a good will. The Imam (as) has also said that one who recites it once a month will be regarded as having paid his dues in the life of this .world

('Chapter ۱۷ (al-Isra

The Messenger of Allah (S) says that whoever recites this Chapter and is moved upon remembering his parents will be given the weight of two kantars of rewards. Imam al-Sadiq (as) says that one who recites this Chapter every Friday night will not die

.before seeing al-Qa'im (al-Mahdi) (as) and will be among his supporters

(Chapter ١٨ (al-Kahaf

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that whoever recites Surat al-Kahaf will be admitted into Paradise, and if he recites it on a Friday, Allah will forgive the sins he has committed or will be committing in ten days, and he will be granted light reaching .the heavens and will be protected against the dissension of the anti-Christ

Imam al-Sadiq (as) has also said that when this Chapter was revealed, it was escorted by seventy thousand angels, and its greatness filled the earth and the skies, and that whoever recites it on the eve of every Friday will die as a martyr and will be .resurrected in the company of the martyrs and will stand with them

(Chapter ١٩ (Maryam

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that anyone who recites this Chapter will be granted rewards as many as the number of those who believed in Zakariyya (as) and those who did not. Imam al-Sadiq has said that if one recites it quite often, he will not die before he, his wealth, and his offspring will be blessed by it, and on the Day of Judgment, he will be among the supporters of Jesus, peace be upon him, and he will .be granted in the hereafter what Solomon (as) was granted in the life of this world

(Chapter ٢٠ (Ta-Ha

The Messenger of Allah (S) is cited saying that one who recites Surat Taha will be granted rewards equivalent to what the Muhajirun and Ansar

will be granted, that the people of Paradise recite only two chapters of the Holy Qur'an: Ya-Sin and Ta-Ha, and that Allah Almighty created both of these Chapters two ",thousand years before creating Adam (as). "Never cease reciting it

Imam al-Sadiq (as) used to say, "for Allah, the most Exalted One, loves it and loves those who recite it. Whoever recites it will be given his book (of reckoning) in his right hand, and he will not be asked about his deeds and will be granted of the rewards that ".with which he will be pleased

('Chapter ٢١ (al-Anbiya

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said, "Whoever recites Surat-al-Anbiya' will be tried by Allah an easy trial, and each and every prophet mentioned in the Holy Qur'an will shake hands with him." Imam al-Sadiq (as) has said, "One who recites it out of his love for it will be in the company of the prophets in Paradise, and he will be highly ".respected in the life of this world

(Chapter ٢٢ (al-Hajj

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that anyone who recites it will be granted as many rewards as the number of those who performed the pilgrimage and the ‘umra. Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq is quoted saying that whoever recites it every three days will perform the pilgrimage to the House of Allah during that year, and if he dies on his .way, he will enter Paradise

(Chapter ٢٣ (al-Muminun

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that one who recites this Chapter will be given the glad tidings by

the angels of the Spirit, of fragrance, and of whatever cools his eyes when the angel of death (as) descends upon him. Imam al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying that if someone recites it every Friday, his deeds will be sealed with happiness, and his residence will .be in the highest pinnacle of Paradise among the prophets and messengers

(Chapter ۲۴ (al-Nur

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his progeny, is quoted saying that whoever recites it will be granted ten rewards for the number of all those who believed in the past as well as those who will in the future believe. Abu Abdullah Imam ".al-Sadiq (as) has also said, "Fortify your wealth, your honor, and your women with it

(Chapter ۲۵ (al-Furqan

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that for one who recites this Chapter each day or each night, nobody in his family will be guilty of the sin of adultery, and when he dies, his soul will be escorted to his grave by seventy thousand angels who will pray and seek Allah's forgiveness for him till he is placed in his grave, and he will enter Paradise without a trial. Imam al-Kazim (as) has said, "Allah will never torment anyone who recites Surat al-Furqan every night, nor will He try him, and his residence ".will be in the highest level of Paradise

('Chapter ۲۶ (al-Shu’ara

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said, "One who recites Surat-al-Shu’ara will receive ten good deeds for the number of all those who believed in Noah (as) and who

disbelieved in Hud, Shu'ayb, Salih, Abraham, and Jesus, peace be upon them, as well as those who disbelieved in Muhammad (S)." Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying that one who recites all chapters which begin with "Taa-Seen" will be among .the true servants of Allah

(Chapter ۲۷ (al-Naml

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that one who recites this Chapter will receive ten good deeds for the number of each and everyone who believed in Sulayman (as) and who disbelieved in Hud, Salih, Shu'ayb, and Ibrahim, peace be upon them, and that he "!will get out of his grave shouting: "La Ilaha Illah-Allah

(Chapter ۲۸ (al-Qasas

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that Allah will grant anyone who recites this .(Chapter ten good deeds for each and every believer and disbeliever in Moses (as

(Chapter ۲۹ (al-'Ankabut

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) has said, "One who recites it will receive ten good deeds for the number of each and every believer and disbeliever." He (as) has also said, "One who recites both Surat al-Rum and al-'Ankabut during the twenty-third night of the ".month of Ramadhan will, by Allah, be among the people of Paradise

(Chapter ۳۰ (al-Rum

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that one who recites Surat al-Rum will receive ten good deeds for each angel praising Allah between the earth and the heavens, and he will have compensated for whatever he missed during his day and night, adding, according to al-Kaf'ami, "I do not make any exception for it, nor do I fear (for having said so) that I am

committing a sin (for making such a statement), and these Suras enjoy a special favor ".with Allah; I mean Surat al-'Ankabut and Surat al-Rum

(Chapter ۳۱ (Luqman

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that whoever recites this Chapter will be in the companiony of Luqman (as) on the Day of Judgment, and he will be rewarded with ten good deeds for everyone who enjoins what is right and forbids what is wrong. He (as) has also said, "Whoever recites it during the night, Allah Almighty will assign thirty angels to protect him from Iblis and his hosts till the morning, and if he ".recites it during the day, they will protect him from Iblis and his hosts till the night

(Chapter ۳۲ (al-Sajdah

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that whoever recites Surat Luqman, Surat al-Sajdah, and Surat al-Mulk will be regarded as though he spent the entire night of Laylatul-Qadr worshipping the Almighty. Imam al-Sadiq (as) has also said, "If one reads it during Friday eve, Allah, the most Exalted One, will grant him his book (of reckoning) in his right hand, and He will not try him for what he had done, and he will be in the company of Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and his ".progeny

(Chapter ۳۳ (al-Ahzab

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said the following about this Chapter: "Whoever reads it and teaches it to his family and those whom his right hand possesses will be granted (security against the torment of the grave." Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as

has said that one who reads it quite often will be on the Day of Judgment in the .(neighborhood of the Prophet (S

('Chapter ٣۴ (Saba

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said, "On the Day of Judgment, each and every prop... het will greet and be the companion of anyone who recites Surat Saba'." Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) has said that whoever recites both Hamd Chapters on the eve of a Friday will remain protected by Allah, and so will his wealth, during his day, and he will not suffer anything evil and will be granted of the best of the life of this world and the life hereafter, so much so that no heart can ever desire more no matter how hard to .satisfy it may be

(Chapter ٣۵ (Fatir

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that one who recites Surat Fatir seeking thereby to please Allah will be called upon by each of the eight gates of Paradise to enter from .whichever he desires

(Chapter ٣۶ (Ya-Sin

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said, "Anyone who enters a cemetery and recites Surat Ya-Sin will have then decreased their [the dead's] suffering and will receive good deeds equalling the number of those buried therein." He (S) has also said that in the Torah it is described as the Chapter that crowns the one who recites it with the best of the life of this world and the life hereafter, and it wards off from him the trials .of this life and the torment of the life to come

Imam Ja'far

al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying that whoever recites this Chapter seeking the Pleasure of Allah will be forgiven and will be granted of the rewards as though he had recited the entire text of the Holy Qur'an twelve times. He (as) has also said, "For everything there is a heart, and the heart of the Qur'an is Chapter Ya-Sin; so, whoever recites it ".during the day will be protected and sustained till the night

(Chapter ۳۷ (al-Saffat

Ahmed ibn Idris quotes al-Ash'ari who quotes Muhammad ibn Hassan quoting Ibn Mahran quoting al-Bataini quoting Ibn al-'Alaa quoting Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) as saying that whoever recites it on a Friday will be protected from all worldly evils, sustained in the life of this world with the most generous portion of sustenance, and Allah will not let his wealth, or offspring, or body be affected by the mischief of any accursed Satan. Furthermore, if he dies that day or night, he will die as a martyr and will be admitted into Paradise in the company of the martyrs and in their level of .Paradise

He (as), as stated on p. ۴۱۹ of al-Tibrisi's Makarim al-Akhlaq, is quoted saying that this Chapter is recited by those who seek dignity in the life of this world and the life to come. The same is stated on p. ۲۹۶, Vol. ۸۹, of al-Majlisi's Bihar al-Anwar. Truly lucky are those blessed with reciting this glorious Chapter of the Holy Qur'an on a continuous basis for they will be honored in

this life and the life to come. May Allah Ta'ala make us among them, Allahomma .Aameen

(Chapter ۳۸ (Sad

Ibn al-Bataini traces the isnad of the following tradition to 'Amr ibn Jubayr who quotes his father citing Imam Abu Ja'far al-Baqir (as) saying, "One who recites Surat Sad during a Friday night will be granted of the good of this life and that of the hereafter what nobody else is granted except either a messenger-prophet or an angel near to Allah, and Allah will admit him into Paradise as well as all the members of his ".household whom he loves, including his servant, or anyone else

(Chapter ۳۹ (al-Zumar

Page ۱۰۲ of Thawab al-A'mal details the rewards of the lucky ones who are blessed with reciting this Sura. Ibn al-Bataini quotes Sandal quoting Harun ibn Kharija quoting :Abu Abdullah Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) saying

Whoever memorizes this Sura will be granted by Allah dignity in this life and the life to come; He will be honored even if he has neither wealth nor populous lineage, and everyone will be in awe of him; He will prohibit hell from touching him and build him in Paradise a thousand cities, in each one of which will be a thousand mansions, each containing a hundred huris. In addition, he will have two flowing fountains and two springs as well as two other ones in two gardens with dark-green foliage and other huris in pavilions confining their looks only to him, and he will have two pairs of each of the fruit trees

.(of Paradise)

(Chapter ۴۰ (al–Mu'min

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said, "The souls of each and every prophet, siddeeq, and believer will bless and seek forgiveness for anyone who recites this Sura." Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) has said that Allah will forgive all the past and future sins of anyone who recites it once every three nights, and that He will make him uphold .righteous speech and make the life hereafter better for him than this life

(Chapter ۴۱ (al–Sajda or Fussilat

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said, "Whoever recites it will be granted ten good deeds for each letter in it." Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) has said that it will be light for him on the Day of Judgment extended as long as his eyes can see, and a source of .joy, and he will live in the life of this world praised, well-liked

(Chapter ۴۲ (al–Shura

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying, "Whoever recites Surat al-Shura will be among those whom the angels bless and for whom they will seek Allah's forgiveness and mercy." Imam Ja'far-al-Sadiq (as) has said that one who recites it will be .resurrected on the Day of Judgment with a face like a full moon

(Chapter ۴۳ (al–Zukhruf

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that whoever recites this Chapter will be on the Day of Judgment among those addressed by Allah thus: "O My servants! There is no fear on you this Day, nor shall you grieve." Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying that one who recites it quite often will receive security in his

grave from Allah against everything harmful and against the constriction of the grave till he stands before Allah Ta’ala, and it will be this Chapter that will permit him to .enter into Paradise

(Chapter ۴۴ (al–Dukhkhan

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that whoever recites this Sura on a Friday night will be forgiven and will receive for each of its verses the rewards of one who sets a hundred thousand slaves free, and seventy thousand angels will seek forgiveness for him; and Allah will build a mansion for whoever recites it on Fridays. Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (as) has said that one who recites it during his obligatory and optional prayers will be resurrected among those who will be secure and Allah will shade him with the shade of His ‘Arsh and will try him an easy trial and give him his .book (of reckoning) in his right hand

(Chapter ۴۵ (al–Jathiya

Prophet Muhammad (S) has said the following about this Chapter: "The faults of whoever reads it will be covered by Allah Who will remove from him his fear when he is brought for judgment." Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (as) has said that whoever recites it .(shall never see the fire, and he will be in the company of Muhammad (S

(Chapter ۴۶ (al–Ahqaf

Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (as) has said, "One who recites it will receive ten good deeds for each particle of sand in the world." He has also said, "One who recites it each night or each Friday night, Allah will not expose him to any fear in

the life of this world and will receive security from the horrors of the Day of ".Judgment

(Chapter ۴۷ (Muhammad

He (as) is also quoted saying that if one recites this Sura, it will be incumbent upon the Almighty, the Praised One, to let him drink of the rivers of Paradise, and that doubt will .never enter his mind with regard to his creed

(Chapter ۴۸ (al-Fath

He (as) is also quoted saying that whoever recites this Chapter will be as though he was present when the Prophet (S) opened Mecca and was with him when he (S) received the oath of allegiance under the tree. Imam al-Sadiq (as) has said the following with regard to this Chapter: "Fortify with it your wealth, women, and ".whatever your right hands possess against harm

(Chapter ۴۹ (al-Hujurat

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) has said that whoever recites this Sura will be granted good deeds for each and everyone who obeyed Allah Ta'ala and who disobeyed Him. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) has said, "One who recites it every night or every day will be ".(among those who will visit the Prophet (S

(Chapter ۵۰ (Qaf

Prophet Muhammad (S) has said the following about this Chapter: "Whoever reads it, Allah will make the agony of death easy for him," and also, "Whoever recites it quite often in his obligatory and optional prayers will receive an increase from Allah Ta'ala in his sustenance, and He will give him his book in his right hand and will try him with ".an easy trial

(Chapter ۵۱ (al-Thariyat

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) has said, "One who recites it will

receive ten good deeds for each and every wind that blew and swept in the life of this world," and that whoever recites it during his day or night will have an ease in his .livelihood

(Chapter ۵۲ (al–Tur

He (as) is also quoted saying that one who recites this Sura, Allah will grant him security from His torment and will let him enjoy His Paradise. He (as) is also quoted .saying that whoever recites it will have the best of both worlds

(Chapter ۵۳ (al–Najm

He (as) is also quoted saying that whoever recites this Chapter will receive ten good deeds for each and every one who believed in the Prophet (S) and who disbelieved in him, and that whoever recites it quite often every day or every night, he will live .among the people praised, loved

(Chapter ۵۴ (al–Qamar

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that whoever recites this Sura every other day will be resurrected with his face looking like a full moon. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) has said, "Whoever recites it will be resurrected by Allah from his grave conveyed on a ".she-camel of the she-camels of Paradise

Here we have to stop for a moment and consider the implication of the "she-camel" to which the Imam (as) refers in this tradition. Surely on the Day of Judgment there will be a great deal of movement and commotion: humans will be arranged in groups, as we are told in Surat al-Saffat and elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an, each group having common denomenators, the good with the good

.and vice versa

The Imam (as) is referring to the she-camels of Paradise, not the she-camels in Paradise, for there are no she-camels in Paradise. After all, what would she-camels !?be doing in Paradise, anyway

Those to whom the Imam (as) spoke did not know means of transportation other than she-camels. His reference to she-camels can be seen as implying means of transporation provided by the angels charged with Paradise and with transporting to it the fortunate ones who will make it their home from the area where they will be tried and once their destiny is determined by the Supreme Judge, the Judge of all .judges, the King of all kings, Glory and Exaltation to Him

What confirms the view that there are no camels in Paradise is one hadith cited on p. ۳۹۴ of Ali ibn Adham's Tafsir in which Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as), through isnad, is quoted saying that there will be no animals in Paradise except Bal'am ibn Ba'ur's donkey (provided to transport the newly born Christ and his mother, peace be upon them), the she-camel of prophet Salih (as), the wolf of prophet Yousuf (as), and the .companion dog of the People of the Cave

This is stated on p. ۱۹۵, Vol. ۸, of Bihar al-Anwar. Space, distance, movement, emotions and feelings, colors, perfumes and odors, etc. will be as real in the life hereafter as they are in this one, only much more intensely, and much more real, than we can ever imagine. To

.move from one place to another will not be subject to one's own desire or free will

Desire and free will, among other things, are at our disposal only in this short life, not in the life to come. This and many more details of the hereafter will Insha-Allah be provided and documented in a book I hope my Maker will enable me to write; your .prayers, dear reader, are sincerely solicited

(Chapter ۵۵ (al-Rahman

Prophet Muhammad (S) has said the following about this Chapter: "Whoever reads it, Allah will have mercy on his weakness and be regarded as having thanked Allah for it." Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying that there is a bride for everything, and the Qur'an's bride is Surat al-Rahman, and that Allah will brighten everyone's face for .[reciting it quite often [on the Day of Judgment

(Chapter ۵۶ (al-Waqi'a

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) has said, "Whoever recites it will not be written down ".among the heedless, and whoever recites it every Friday night will be loved by Allah

(Chapter ۵۷ (al-Hadeed

He (as) is also quoted saying that one who recites this Sura will be written down among those who believed in Allah and His Messenger (S). The Imam (as) has also said, "Whoever recites all the Suras which start by glorifying Allah(۱) before going to bed will not die before meeting al-Qa'im (al-Mahdi), peace be upon him, and if he does ".(die, he will be a neighbor of the Prophet (S

(Chapter ۵۸ (al-Mujadila

He (as) is also quoted saying that whoever recites this Chapter will be written down

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۱- These are five Chapters: al-Hadeed, al-Hashr, al-Saff, al-Jum`a, and al-Taghabun.

as being among Allah's party, the ones who will achieve victory on the Day of Judgment. The Imam (as) has also said, "Whoever recites Surat al-Hadeed and al-Mujadila in his obligatory prayers, and continues to do so, will not be exposed by Allah ".to any hardship as long as he lives

(Chapter ۵۹ (al-Hashr

Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (as) has said that whoever recites Surat al-Hashr will be blessed by Allah Who will take his soul as though he had been a martyr, and Paradise, hell, the ‘Arsh and the Kursi will all seek Allah's forgiveness for him, and that whoever recites whatever verses he can of Surat al-Rahman and Surat al-Hashr during the night, .(Allah will assign one guardian angel till the morning (protecting him

(Chapter ۶۰ (al-Mumtahana

Al-Kaf’ami quotes the Prophet of Islam (S) saying the following about this Chapter: "Whoever reads it will receive intercession from all believing men and women on the Day of Judgment." Both al-Majlisi and al-Tibrisi tell us that Ibn al-Bataini traces the isnad of this tradition to ‘Asim al-Khayyat who quotes Imam Ali ibn al-Husayn al-Sajjad Zaynul-’Abidin (as) saying, "Whoever recites this Sura in his obligatory and optional prayers will have been ascertained by Allah as having full conviction, and He will fill his heart with light, and neither poverty nor insanity will ever afflict him nor any ".of his offspring

(Chapter ۶۱ (al-Saff

Prophet Muhammad (S), as we are told on p. ۵۲۰ of al-Kaf’ami's Misbah, has said, "Whoever recites it, Jesus (as) will pray and seek forgiveness for him as long as he

is in the life of this world, and he will be his companion on the Day of Judgment." Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying that if one recites it quite often in his obligatory and optional prayers, Allah will place him in the ranks of His angels, prophets and .messengers

(Chapter ۶۲ (al-Jum'a

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said, "Whoever recites it will be granted ten good deeds for each and everyone who attended and who did not attend Friday congregational prayers in all Muslim lands." Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) has said, "Every believing man and woman, if he is one of our followers, must recite during Friday night both Surat al-Jum'a and Surat al-A'la, and in his noon prayers he has to recite Surat al-Jum'a and Surat al-Munafiqun; so, if he/she does so, he/she will be regarded as following in the footsteps of the Prophet (S), and his/her rewards from Allah will be ".Paradise

(Chapter ۶۳ (al-Munafiqun

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted as having said that anyone who recites this .Chapter will be cleared from doubt and hypocrisy with regard to the creed

(Chapter ۶۴ (al-Taghabun

Al-Kaf'ami and al-Majlisi indicate that Ibn al-Bataini cites Ibn-Abul-'Alaa quoting Abu Busayr quoting Abu Abdullah Imam al-Sadiq (as) saying that one who recites this Sura in his obligatory and optional prayers, it will intercede for him on the Day of Judgment and be a truthful witness for him testifying to the One Who will permit it to testify, and .it shall not part with him till it escorts him into Paradise

(Chapter ۶۵ (al-Talaq

The

Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted by al-Kaf'ami and al-Majlisi, as well as by the author of Al-Durr al-Manthur who indicates the same on p. ١٠٧, Vol. ۶, of his book, saying that whoever recites this Chapter will die as an adherent of the Sunnah of the Prophet (S). Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying that if one recites it together with Surat al-Tahreem in his obligatory prayers will be given refuge on the Day of Judgment from .fear and depression and from the fire

(Chapter ۶۶ (al-Tahreem

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that whoever recites this Sura will be granted by Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala a true repentance. Both al-Majlisi and al-Tibrisi indicate that the rewards of reciting this Sura are the same like those due for whoever recites .Surat al-Talaq. The same view is endorsed by al-Kaf'ami

(Chapter ۶۷ (al-Mulk or Tabarak

Prophet Muhammad (S) has said the following about this Chapter: "Whoever reads it will be regarded as though he had remained during Laylatul-Qadr awake all night long worshipping his Lord. It is the one that will protect and save whoever recites it from the construction of the grave." Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) has said, "Whoever recites it every day and night, his feet will say to [the angels] Nakir and Nakeer, 'You have no right of passage at all."-Al-Tibrisi says it grants whoever recites it security till he .enters Paradise

(Chapter ۶۸ (al-Qalam or Noon

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said, "Whoever recites it will be granted the rewards (of those whose conduct is good." Imam Ja'far-al-Sadiq (as

has said, "Whoever recites it in his obligatory or optional prayers will never suffer ".from poverty, and Allah will grant him security from the constriction of the grave

(Chapter ۶۹ (al-Haqqah

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that one who recites this Sura will receive an easy trial on the Day of Judgment. "Recite this Sura quite often," Imam al-Sadiq (as) instructed his followers, "in your obligatory as well as optional prayers, for doing so is a sign of belief in Allah and His Messenger (S), and whoever recites it will never ".deviate from his right creed till he dies

(Chapter ۷۰ (al-Ma'arij

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that whoever recites this Chapter will be granted the rewards of those who are true to their trusts and promises and who always uphold their prayers. "Whoever maintains its recitation," Imam al-Sadiq (as) has said, "will not be asked on the Day of Judgment about any sin which he/she had done, and Allah Ta'ala will admit him into His Paradise in the company of Muhammad, ".peace and blessings of Allah upon him and his progeny

(Chapter ۷۱ (Nuh

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that whoever recites this Sura will be regarded as being among the believers who are included in Noah's supplication, and that whoever .believes in Allah and His Book should never stop reciting it

Page ۱۰۸ of Thawab al-A'mal traces a statement made by Imam Abu Abdullah Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) as quoted by Ibn al-Bataini who quotes al-Husayn ibn Hashim who quotes his father quoting

the Imam (as) saying, "Anyone who believes in Allah and recites His Book should not stop reciting Surat Nuh, for any servant who reads it in anticipation, being patient, in an obligatory or optional prayer, Allah Ta'ala will let him reside among those who have truly obeyed Him and will grant him three gardens in addition to honoring him and marrying him to a hundred huris and four thousand others who were never touched by anyone before, by the will of Allah." This is recorded also in al-Majlisi's Bihar al-Anwar.

(Chapter ۷۲ (al-Jinn

Prophet Muhammad (S) has said the following about this Chapter: "Whoever reads it will be granted good deeds equal in number to all the Jinns and Satans who believed or disbelieved in Muhammad (S)." Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) has said, "Whoever recites it quite often will not receive any harm from the eyes of the Jinns, from their sorcery or mischief, and he will join the company of Muhammad (S)."

(Chapter ۷۳ (al-Muzzammil

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted by al-Kaf'ami as having said that one who recites this Sura will not suffer hardship in this life nor in the life to come. What more can a believer hope for? Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) has said, "Whoever recites it will have warded off hardship from his life both in this life and in the life hereafter." Whoever recites it during the 'isha prayers or during the last part of the night will have both that night and day, together with this Sura, testify for

him, and Allah Almighty will let him live a good life and will take his soul away .beautifully

(Chapter ۷۴ (al-Muddaththir

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that the person who recites this Sura will be granted of the good deeds the equivalent of the number of those who believed and who disbelieved in the Prophet (S) in Mecca. His great grandson Imam Al-Sadiq (as), whose knowledge is derived from that of the Messenger of Allah (S) and who bears one of his titles: al-Sadiq, is quoted as having said, "If one recites it in his obligatory prayers, it will be incumbent upon the most Exalted One to make him join the company of the Prophet (S) in his status, and he will never suffer misery in the life of ".this world at all

(Chapter ۷۵ (al-Qiyama

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said with reference to one who recites this Chapter, "Whoever recites it, I and Gabriel shall testify for him on the Day of Judgment that he was a believer in the Day of Judgment, and his face will be distinguished from all other faces [in its radiance]." Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) is quoted as having said that "Whoever recites it quite often and acts upon it, Allah will send it [Sura] in the best way to convey to him glad tidings and to smile in his face, and he will have no problem ".passing the Sirat(۱) and the Scales

(Chapter ۷۶ (al-Dahr or Hal Ata

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that whoever recites this Sura will be rewarded

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Throughout this book, I have preferred to use this word as it exists in the Holy - ۱ Qur'an because I am convinced that there is no English equivalent for it, as is the case with nUmarous other Qur'anic diction words. Words like "path," "way," or "highway" .do not seem to me to convey the same meaning

with Paradise and with silk clothes. Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (as) has said, "Whoever recites it on a Thursday will be granted by the Almighty in Paradise a hundred huris ".(with large lovely eyes, and he will be in the company of the Prophet (S

(Chapter ۷۷ (al-Mursalat

The Messenger of Allah (S) says that if someone recites this Sura, it will be written down for him that he is not among the polytheists. Imam al-Sadiq (as) has said about ".(this Chapter, "Whoever reads it, Allah will get him introduced to the Prophet (S

('Chapter ۷۸ (al-Naba

The Prophet (S) has said that one who recites this Chapter will be provided by Allah with a cool drink on the Day of Judgment. Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (as) has said, "Whoever recites it daily will visit the Sacred House (the Ka’ba) before the year is ".over

(Chapter ۷۹ (al-Nazi’at

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that whoever recites this Chapter will not be tried on the Day of Judgment except for a short period of time equalling the time it takes to perform an obligatory prayer. Imam al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying, "Whoever recites it will die fresh (not suffering from thirst), will be resurrected fresh, and will enter ".Paradise fresh

(Chapter ۸۰ (Abasa

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted as having said that one who recites this Sura will come on the Day of Judgment smiling, optimistic. Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying that whoever recites this Chapter as well as the Chapter of al-Takweer will be shaded in Allah's shade and Munificence in His

.Paradise

(Chapter ۸۱ (al–Takweer

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that whoever recites this Chapter will not be exposed by Allah when the books of deeds are spread open, and "whoever loves to ".see me on the Day of Judgment," the Prophet (S) continued, "let him recite this Sura

(Chapter ۸۲ (al–Infitar

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that if one recites it, Allah will record for him a good deed for each drop of rain and for each grave and will improve his condition on the Day of Judgment. Imam al-Sadiq (as) has said about this Chapter, "Whoever reads Surat-al-Infitār and Surat al-Inshiqaq, keeping them constantly in mind, during obligatory prayers and optional prayers, no veil will shield him from Allah Ta'ala, and Allah, the most Glorified One, will look after him till people are through with their ".reckoning

(Chapter ۸۳ (al–Mutaffifeen

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that if someone recites it, Allah will let him drink of a sealed nectar on the Day of Judgment. Imam al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying, "Whoever becomes accustomed to reciting it in his obligatory prayers, Allah will grant him security from the fire and the reckoning, and he will not pass over the path of ".hell

(Chapter ۸۴ (al–Inshiqaq

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that whoever recites it will never be given his .book of reckoning from behind his back

(Chapter ۸۵ (al–Buruj

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that the person who recites it will be granted ten good deeds for each and every Friday and Day of Arafat in the life of this

world, whereas Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (as) has said, "A person who recites this Sura in his obligatory prayers will be gathered with the prophets of Allah (as), for it is their ".Sura

(Chapter ۸۶ (al-Tariq

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that if one recites this Sura, he will be given ten good deeds for each and every star in the skies, and Imam al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying that one who recites it in his obligatory prayers will acquire a special status .with Allah, and he will be in Paradise among the companions of the prophets

(Chapter ۸۷ (al-A’la

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that one who recites this verse will receive ten good deeds for each and every character in Allah's revelations to Ibrahim (Abraham), Moses, Jesus, peace be upon all of them, and Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny. Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (as) says that if someone recites it in his obligatory or optional prayers, it will be said to him on the Day ".of Judgment, "Enter Paradise from whichever gate you wish

(Chapter ۸۸ (al-Ghashiya

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that whoever recites it will receive a very easy trial. Imam al-Sadiq (as) has said, "Whoever constantly recites it in his obligatory and optional prayers will be included in Allah's mercy in the life of this world and the life to ".come, and He will grant him security from His torment

(Chapter ۸۹ (al-Fajr

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that one who recites it in ten successive nights will be

forgiven by Allah, and if he recites it during daytimes, it will be a light for him on the Day of Judgment. Imam al-Sadiq (as) has said: "Whoever reads it in his obligatory and optional prayers will be in Paradise on the same level with Imam Husayn (as) because ".it is al-Husayn's Sura

(Chapter ۹۰ (al-Balad

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that whoever recites this Sura will be secure on the Day of Judgment from Allah's Wrath. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) has said, "Whoever recites it in his obligatory and optional prayers will be identified in the life of ".this world as being among the righteous

(Chapter ۹۱ (al-Shams

The Messenger of Allah (S) says that whoever recites it will be regarded as having of... fered charity with everything under the sun and the moon. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) says that in favor of whoever recites it quite often, and also recites Surat al-Layl, Surat al-Duha, and Surat al-Inshirah, everything will testify on the Day of Judgment, ".including his hair, complexion, flesh, blood, and veins for him

(Chapter ۹۲ (al-Layl

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that whoever recites it will be given so much till he is satisfied, and Allah will not let him be exposed to hardship and will make life easy for .him

(Chapter ۹۳ (al-Duha

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that one who recites this Chapter will be among those accepted by Allah, the most Exalted One, as being a member of the nation of Muhammad (S) worthy of his intercession, and he will receive ten good deeds

.for each orphan and beggar

(Chapter ۹۴ (al–Inshirah

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that whoever recites it will be given of the rewards as though he had met the Prophet (S) grieved and had the cause of his grief .removed

(Chapter ۹۵ (al–Teen

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that Allah will give two merits to anyone who recites this Chapter: good health and conviction as long as he lives, and when he dies, Allah Almighty will give him of the rewards of the fast of all those who recited it. Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (as) has said, "Whoever recites it in his obligatory and optional prayers ".will be given of Paradise whatever pleases him

(Chapter ۹۶ (al–’Alaq

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that whoever recites this Chapter will be regarded as though he has recited the entire Qur'an. Imam al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying that one who recites this Sura then dies that day or night will have died as a martyr and .like one who assisted the Prophet (S) with his sword

(Chapter ۹۷ (al–Qadr

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that one who recites it is regarded (by the Almighty) as though he fasted the month of Ramadhan and spent Laylatl-Qadr adoring his Maker. Imam al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying that whoever recites this Chapter in one of the obligatory prayers will be addressed: "O servant of Allah! Your past sins have been forgiven, so resume your good deeds!" And he (as) has also said, "Whoever recites it audibly will be like one raising his sword in defense

of Islam, and if he recites it silently will be regarded as though he died a martyr for the cause of Islam, and if someone recites it ten times, a thousand of his sins will be ".forgiven

(Chapter ۹۸ (al–Bayyina

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that one who recites it will be gathered on the Day of Judgment with the best of Allah's creation in place and condition. He (S) has also said, "Had people known what merits it contains, they would have left their families and wealth aside and learned it." Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) has said that whoever recites this Sura will be free from shirk and will be admitted in the creed of the .Prophet (S), and Allah will try him an easy trial

(Chapter ۹۹ (al–Zilzal

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said, "Whoever recites this Chapter will be regarded as though he read Surat al-Baqara and will be granted of the rewards as though he had recited one quarter of the Qur'an." Imam al-Sadiq (as) has said about this Chapter, "Whoever reads it in his optional prayers will never be afflicted with an earthquake or lightning or any other worldly calamity, and if he dies, his Lord will ".order to have him admitted into Paradise

(Chapter ۱۰۰ (al–'Adiyat

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said that whoever recites it will be granted of the rewards ten good deeds for everyone who spent the night at Muzdalifa [during the pilgrimage] and attended the big gathering [at Arafat]. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) has said, "Whoever recites it

quite often will be resurrected in the company of Ali, peace be upon him, on the Day of .Judgment and will be among his companions

(Chapter ۱۰۱ (al–Qari'a

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that whoever recites this Sura, Allah will let his scale of good deeds weigh heavily. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying that one who recites this Sura will receive security from Allah Ta'ala against the dissension of the anti-Christ, against believing in the latter, and against hell's stink. The isnad of this tradition is traced to al-Bataini who quotes Isma'eel ibn al-Zubayr .quoting Ibn Thabit

(Chapter ۱۰۲ (al–Takathur

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that one who recites this Surah will not be tried by Allah, Glory and Exaltation are His, regarding the blessings which He bestowed upon him and will be regarded as though he recited a thousand verses of .the Holy Qur'an

Ibn 'Umar narrated this tradition: "The Messenger of Allah (S) asked us once, 'Can anyone among you read one thousand verses from the Qur'an a day?' We said, 'O Messenger of Allah! Who can?!' He (S) said, 'Can anyone among you recite Surat al-Takathur?!'" He (S) is also quoted saying, "Whoever recites this Sura when he goes to bed will be protected from the grave's trial." Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying that whoever recites this Chapter in his obligatory prayers will have rewards .due to a thousand martyrs

(Chapter ۱۰۳ (al–'Asr

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that whoever recites this Chapter will have his

deeds sealed with patience and will be on the Day of Judgment on the right track. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) has said that whoever recites this Sura in his optional prayers will be resurrected with a smiling face, his eyes being cooled, till he enters Paradise. This tradition is quoted by al-Kaf'ami and al-Majlisi, and it is recorded on p. ۳۸۶, Vol. ۶, of Al-Durr al-Manthur.

(Chapter ۱۰۴ (al-Humaza

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that one who recites this Chapter will be granted ten good deeds for each and everyone who ridiculed the Prophet (S) and his companions. Imam al-Sadiq (as) has said about this Chapter, "Whoever reads it in his optional prayers, it will ward off poverty from him, bringing him sustenance and protecting him against a tragic death."

(Chapter ۱۰۵ (al-Feel

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that Allah will protect whoever recites this Sura against calumny and metamorphosis. Imam al-Sadiq (as) said that one who recites it in his obligatory prayers will receive good testimony on his behalf from every plain and mountain and earth loam that he used to uphold the prayers, and he will enter Paradise without reckoning. Al-Kaf'ami comments by saying that such extra-ordinary rewards will not be granted to just anybody but are due to the sincere pious ones, those who are endowed with knowledge and with acting upon such knowledge. This view is shared by Ibn Tawoos in his book Al-Iqbal.

To all these three great men, and to all those who agree with them, we

would like to humbly say: "How do you know that? Has the Prophet (S) or any member of his Ahl al-Bayt (as) said so? If what you claim is true, then only very few will receive these mighty rewards, and they will probably be the least among all humans to need them, especially since Allah will have already been pleased with them due to their .piety and knowledge

Who will, then, come to the aid of sinners like ourselves? Who will wipe out our sins, faults, and shortcomings, if reciting these chapters do not do us any good? We think the Almighty is much greater than that and much more Clement. We think He is more ready to forgive sinning Muslims (like ourselves) who repent and regret than to punish "...them

The great mentor of the nation al-Saduq, may Allah have mercy on his soul, is quoted by al-Majlisi on p. ۳۳۷, Vol. ۸۹, of Bihar al-Anwar, as saying, "Anyone who recites Surat al-Feel in one obligatory rek'a ought to recite Surat Quraysh in the other, for they both are like one Sura, and one should not recite only one of them in his obligatory prayers." This is also stated on p. ۱۱۴ of Thawab-al-A'mal. "Anyone" implies that the Almighty's mercy is spacious enough to include everyone, even sinners who deeply .and sincerely regret and repent their sins

Our martyred Imam Abu Abdullah Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) has written once in his own hand-writing: "When you face your foe, you ought to look

.at him and recite Surat al-Feel," as we are told by both al-Tibrisi and al-Majlisi

(Chapter ۱۰۶ (Quraysh

Al-Majlisi has indicated that this Sura has the same merits as its sister above; therefore, he did not add anything while discussing the merits of Qur'anic chapters in Vol. ۸۹ of his book Bihar al-Anwar. The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that whoever recites it will be granted ten good deeds for each and everyone who circled the Ka'ba (made tawaf) and took to seclusion (I'tikaf) therein. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) has said, "One who recites it will be resurrected on the Day of Judgment conveyed on one of the conveyances of Paradise till he is seated at the light tables in .Paradise

The reader is reminded that there are nUmarous things awaiting us in the life to come for which there are no words in our limited human vocabulary. An analogy of such vocabulary, when it comes to the life hereafter, is like the sophisticated human vocabulary, in its nUmarous languages and countless dialects, compared to the .vocabulary of an animal whose share of sounds and motions is the most modest

There is also so much reference to light when it comes to life after death, including the waiting period known as the barzakh during which the dead wait for the Resurrection, .and during which their life in the grave is a world of its own

If Allah Almighty grants me life, health, and His divine assistance, I will Insha-Allah write a three-volume

book on death, the Judgement Day, and life after death (I.e., on Paradise and hell), a volume for each. A chapter in Vol. ١ will Insha-Allah deal with the most fascinating subject of angels. If you wish to see such a book written and published, I need your .prayers

(Chapter ١٠٧ (al–Ma'un or al–Deen

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that Allah will forgive the sins of whoever recites it, and he will be regarded as having paid his zakat. Al-Bataini traces the isnad of this Sura to Isma'eel ibn al-Zubayr who quotes 'Amr ibn Thabit quoting Imam Abu Abdullah Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) as saying that if someone recites it in his obligatory and optional prayers, Allah will accept his prayers and fast and will not try him about what .he did in the short life of this world

(Chapter ١٠٨ (al–Kawthar

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that Allah will let everyone who recites this Sura drink of the rivers of Paradise and will give him of the rewards the equivalent to the number of all sacrifices offered by the servants of Allah on the Day of Sacrifice .(Eid al-Adha) or any other sacrifice intended to seek His Pleasure

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying that one who recites this Sura in his obligatory and optional prayers will be given to drink of the Pool of Kawthar; he will converse with the Messenger of Allah (S) and will be at the very fountainhead of Tuba. .The same is recorded in Thawab al-A'mal

(Chapter ١٠٩ (al–Kafirun

,On pp. ٣٣٩-٣۴٠

Vol. ٨٩, of Bihar al-Anwar, the author quotes al-Mufeed quoting Abdullah ibn Abu Shaykh quoting Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ahmed al-Hakeemi quoting Abdel-Rahman ibn Abdullah quoting Wahab ibn Jareer quoting his father quoting Muhammad ibn Ishaq ibn Bashshar quoting Sa'eed ibn Meena saying that a number of Qurayshi notables, including 'Utbah ibn Rabee'a, Umayyah ibn Khalaf, al-Waleed ibn al-Mugheerah, and al-'As saying once to the Messenger of Allah (S), "O Muhammad! Let us worship what you worship while you worship what we worship, so we will all share common grounds, and you will still be in charge; so, if what we follow is right, you will have thus obtained your share of it, and if you are right, we will have obtained our share of it," whereupon Allah, the Praised One, the Glorified, brought .down Surat al-Kafirun

The author goes on to tell other incidents related to this Chapter, filling more than four pages of his voluminous book and providing the reader with page numbers of as many as eight references for those who would like to research it further. The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that one who recites this Sura will be regarded as though he has read one quarter of the Holy Qur'an, and the most wicked of Satans will be kept away from him, and he will be cleared from shirk and will be exempted from having to go through the horrors of the Day of Terror (Resurrection Day). He (S) has also said

that whoever recites it before going to bed will sleep secure from shirk. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying that whoever recites this Chapter and the Chapter of .Ikhlas in one of his obligatory prayers will be forgiven, and so will his parents

(Chapter ١١٠ (al–Nasr

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said, "Whoever recites this Sura will be regarded as though he were present with me when Mecca was opened (for Muslim troops)." Imam al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying that whoever recites this Sura in his obligatory or optional prayers will be granted victory by Allah over his foes. In Fiqh al-Rida (as), it is stated that if one recites this Chapter in an optional or obligatory prayer, Allah will grant him victory over all his enemies and will enable him to perform what is .obligatory

(Chapter ١١١ (al–Lahab

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying, "If someone recites this Chapter, I will wish that Allah will never permit him to be in the company of Abu Lahab." Imam al-Sadiq (as) has said the following about this Chapter, "If you recite this Sura, invoke Allah to curse Abu Lahab, for he was among those who belied Muhammad, peace be upon him and his progeny, and falsified his message." This quotation is recorded by .Abu Ali al-Tibrisi in his Mujma'ul-Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an

(Chapte ١١٢ (al–Ikhlas

More than eighteen pages in Vol. ٨٩ of Bihar al-Anwar, starting with p. ٣۴۴, discuss the merits of this great Chapter and one of the greatest in the Holy Qur'an. A voluminous book can

be written only about the merits of the Chapters of the Holy Qur'an. The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying, "Whoever recites al-Ikhlas will be as though he has recited one third of the Holy Qur'an and will be granted ten good deeds for each and everyone who believed in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the Day of Judgment."

He (S) has also said, "If someone recites it once, he will be blessed; if he recites it twice, he and his family will be blessed." Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) has said, "Whoever recites it eleven times after fajr prayers will be safeguarded against committing any sin that day despite Satan's nose." Al-Bataini quotes Sayf ibn 'Ameerah quoting Abu Bakr al-Hadrami quoting Abu Abdullah Imam al-Sadiq (as) saying, "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day ought to recite Surat al-Ikhlas after each obligatory prayer, for whoever recites it will gain the good of this life and the life to come, and Allah will forgive him, his parents, and their offspring." One particular incident related by al-Majlisi with reference to this great Chapter is worth quoting here as narrated by Anas, a companion of the Prophet (S), thus:

We were once in the company of the Messenger of Allah (S) at Tabuk. The sun rose one day with rays and light the like of which we had never seen before. The Messenger of Allah (S) kept wondering about its light and rays. Suddenly Gabriel (as) came

to him, so he (S) asked him, "What is with the sun, O Gabriel, and what is with its light "?and illumination and rays which I have never seen before

Gabriel (as) said, "This is due to Mu'awiyah ibn Mu'awiyah al-Laythi (al-Mazni) who died today in Medina; so Allah sent seventy thousand angels to perform the prayers on his soul." "What for?" asked the Prophet (S). "He used to recite Surat al-Ikhlas quite often," Gabriel (as) answered, "as he stood, sat, or walked, during the night or the day." Then the Prophet (S) turned to us and said, "Recite it as much as you can, for it denotes your Lord; if one recites it fifty times, Allah will raise him fifty thousand degrees and remove from him fifty thousand sins and record for him fifty thousand ".good deeds, and if one recites it more, Allah will give him more

Ibn al-Mutawakkil quotes Muhammad al-Attar who quotes al-Ash'ari quoting Ahmed ibn Hilal quoting Eisa ibn Abdullah quoting his forefathers quoting Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) citing the Messenger of Allah (S) saying, "If someone recites Surat al-Ikhlas when he goes to bed, Allah will forgive the sins he committed in fifty years." Imam Abu Abdullah al-Sadiq (as) is quoted by Sulayman ibn Khalid, one of his companions, saying, a recorded on pp. ۳۴۹-۳۵۰, Vol. ۸۹, of Bihar al-Anwar, and on p. ۲۱۳ of Thawab al-A'mal, "If three days pass away and one does not recite Surat al-Ikhlas in any of his

prayers, he will be forsaken and conviction will be stripped from his neck, and if he dies during these three days, he will be regarded as one who disbelieved in Allah, the ".Great

(Chapter ۱۱۳ (al–Falaq

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that one who recites both this Sura and the next (al-Nas) will be as though he recited all the Books which Allah Almighty has revealed, and he, peace be upon him and his progeny, ordered his companions to .recite them upon waking up and upon going to bed

(Chapter ۱۱۴ (al–Nas

.Its merits are similar to those of its sister, Surat al-Falaq

May Allah Almighty enable all of us to appreciate the Holy Qur'an as it ought to be .appreciated and assist us in memorizing its verses and chapters, Allahomma Aameen

The Significance of the Fast will be realized only at the moment of Death

One will know how well he observed the fast at the moment he dies; it is then that prayers will take a form and stand at his right, as he lies in his grave, and zakat on his left, while his benevolence and good treatment of his parents will look him in the eyes. Everything will be personified in the life hereafter, starting from the moment of death. The fast will then be personified as perseverance, the exercise in patience as one faces thirst and hunger; it will stand not far away, urging prayers and zakat to help .the deceased person, telling them that if they did not, he would

It is in such dire situation that the true value of fast is

realized__when it is too late for many. And one will feel the profound pain of regret for not having observed the fast and the prayers as he should have when questions are put forth to him by the two angels Munkir and Nakeer who will come to him in the most horrific form, addressing him in a voice louder than thunder and looking at him with eyes emitting lightning, asking him one question after another. Nothing can compare with the agony of death for those with whom Allah is not pleased, absolutely .nothing

A dying person, as we are told in many books dealing with death and the hereafter, will encounter agonies the extent of which is known only by the Almighty. Life, real life, starts at the moment of death... A dying person is like one awakening from a brief .dream. This brief dream is life as we know it here on earth

Shaykh al-Ghazali had made a very terse statement in this regard when he said, on p. ۴۴۵, Vol. ۴, of his book Al-Ahya, "Had a servant of Allah had no more than the agony, the horror, and the torment of the moments of death, he would have found no joy in his life at all, and he would not have felt happy for a moment, and he would not have become indifferent or negligent [with regard to his obligations] in the least." Prophet ",Moses (as) was asked by the Almighty how he found death. "I found it

he said, "like a live bird being fried in a pan; it neither dies so it can rest, nor does it fly ".away and be saved

He also is quoted saying that he found it like a live sheep being skinned by a butcher. It is during moments like these that a servant of Allah wishes he had spent his entire life in fast and prayers. Abraham (Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him), as we are told on p. ۷۹ of Ibrahim Muhammad al-Jamal's book on life after death, asked the angel of death (as) to show him how he takes away the soul of a good servant of Allah, one who has performed his prayers and observed the fast and all other obligations, so he told him to look the other way. He did, then he looked at the angel and saw a young man wearing good clothes, smelling good, and his complexion was .radiant

Ibrahim (as) said, "By Allah! Had a believer enjoyed nothing more than casting a look at your face, he would have felt contented." Then he asked him how he took the souls of the disbelievers away. "Look the other way," said the angel of death to Ibrahim (as). When Ibrahim (as) looked again, the angel of death appeared to him in human form: a person as dark as coal with his feet on earth and head in the skies, the ugliest the eyes can ever see; each hair on his body was a flame

of fire. Ibrahim (as) then said, "By Allah! Had a disbeliever cast one look at you, it ".would have sufficed him

?What is al–Sirat al–Mustaqeem

The significance of fast will be realized during a much more critical time: when the souls are to pass on al-Sirat al-Mustaqeem, the Straight Path, the path regarding which the believers pray Allah to keep their feet firm as they pass on it, the one mentioned in Surat al-Fatiha and regarding which they plead to the Almighty at least :ten times a day (twice in each rek'a) saying

Guide us to the Straight Path (al-Sirat al-Mustaqeem)" (Holy Qur'an, Surah Fateha" .(۱:۶

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as), as recorded on p. ۴۱, Vol. ۱, of Tabatabai's (۱) Al-Mizan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an, was asked once about the meaning of this verse; he said, "It means: Guide us to upholding the path that leads to Your pleasure, that ends at Your Paradise, that prohibits us from following our own desires and thus deviate, or follow ".our own views and thus perish

In his Tafsir, al-Ayyashi quotes Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) saying that al-Sirat al-Mustaqeem is the Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali (as). Al-Sirat al-Mustaqeem is referred to in verse ۶۱ of Surat Ya-Sin (Ch. ۳۶), in verse ۵۲ of Surat al-Shura (Ch. ۴۲), in verse ۱۶ of Surat al-Maaida (Ch. ۵), in verses ۱۲۶ and ۱۶۱ of Surat al-An'am (Ch. ۶), in verses ۷۰ and ۱۷۴ of Surat al-Nisaa (Ch. ۴), in verse ۴۲ of Surat al-Hijr (Ch. ۱۵), and in

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۱- His full name is: Muhammad Husayn ibn Sayyid Muhammad ibn Sayyid Husayn ibn Mirza Ali Asgher al-Tabrizi al-Tabatabai, the judge. He was born in ۱۸۹۲ in Tabriz and died in Qum in ۱۹۸۱. His ۲۱-Volume exegesis, Al-Mizan, is only one of his nUmarous works. The edition utilized for this book was published in ۱۹۹۱ by Al-A`lami Establishment of Beirut, Lebanon. Hujjatul-Islam Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi, founder of the Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania, has for years been translating this valuable

.exegesis into English

other verses where it is described as the Sabeel, another word for path, leading to the .Almighty

Abdul-Rahman ibn Muhammad al-Hassani quotes Ahmed ibn 'Eisa ibn Abu Maryam quoting Muhammad ibn Ahmed al-'Arjami quoting Ali ibn Hatim al-Minqari quoting al-Mufaddal ibn 'Umar saying, "I asked Abu Abdullah (Imam al-Sadiq [as]) about the Sirat, and he said, 'It is the Path to knowing Allah, the most Exalted, the most Great, .and there are two such paths: one in the life of this world, and one in the life hereafter

The Sirat in this life is the Imam whose obedience is incumbent; whoever knows him in this life and follows his guidance will be able to pass on the (other) Sirat which is a path over hell in the hereafter, and whoever does not know him in this life, his feet will slip away from the Sirat in the hereafter so he falls into the fire of hell.'" This is .recorded on pp. ۱۳-۱۴ of Ma'ani al-Akhbar and also on p. ۶۶, Vol. ۸, of Bihar al-Anwar

It is when you come to that Sirat that you will find out how well you performed your fast in the life of this world. Each and every soul has to pass over al-Sirat al-Mustaqeem, the straight path over hell, a fire more intense in heat than boiling molten brass, with seven bridges over it the length of each one of which is three thousand ,years: one thousand to vertically ascend, one thousand to horizontally cross

.and one thousand to descend

It is thinner than a human hair, more sharp than the sharpest sword, and darker than the darkest night inside a tunnel. Each bridge has seven branches, and each branch is like a long lance with sharp teeth: each servant of Allah will be confined on each and every one of them and be asked about all the injunctions the Almighty had required him to perform during his life on this planet. In the first of such stops he will be asked about belief and conviction, about shirk and hypocrisy. In the second he will be asked about prayers, what they contain, how to perform them, and whether he performed .them properly and on time

In the third he will be asked about zakat, its types, and whether he paid it or not. And it is in the fourth one that he will be asked about the fast... It is then that he will realize whether he upheld this important obligation or not, whether he offered charity or not, and whether he regretted and repented during the month of Ramadhan or not. In the fifth he will be asked about the pilgrimage and 'umra, why he did not perform them, or why he failed to perform them properly, and how they are to be performed. In the sixth he will be asked about wudu (ablution) and ghusul, how he performed them, .which one is compulsory and which one is optional

Finally, in the seventh, he

will be asked about how kind he was to his parents and kin, and whether he did injustice to any human being. In the absence of sufficient optional good deeds such as offering charity, helping a needy Muslim, performing optional prayers or fasts..., etc., if one gives the wrong answer to any question in any of these stops, he will fall into the pit of hell underneath..., as Abdel-Jabbar al-Rubay'I tells us in his book Al-Tathkira fi ahwal al-mawt wal akhira, having collected such details from various books of hadith .and Sunnah

He adds saying, on p. ١٣٠, that the bridges will be shaken by the weight of crossing people who will climb on top of one another, causing these bridges to move like a ship tossed by a wind storm in the midst of the sea. al-Sirat separates Paradise from hell. Only those who cross it successfully will achieve salvation and bliss. With reference to :those who will fall into hell, the Almighty says

Have you not considered those who have changed Allah's favor into blasphemy and caused their people to fall into the abode of perdition? (Holy Qur'an, Surah Ibrahim (١۴:٢٨

(To whomsoever My wrath is due, he shall fall therein. (Holy Qur'an Surah Taha ٢٠:٨١

Whoever follows My guidance will not lose his way nor fall into perdition. (Holy Qur'an, (Surah Taha ٢٠:١٢٣

Nor will his wealth benefit him when he falls headlong (into the pit of fire) (Holy Qur'an, .(Surah Layl ٩٢:١١

If one is found as having been derelict in

performing any of his obligations, the angels questioning him will try to find out whether he somehow made up with optional good deeds. Once he is cleared, he will be escorted into Paradise. It is to such stopping and questioning that the Almighty refers, addressing His angels to

(Stop them, for they must be questioned. (Holy Qur'an, Surah Saffat ۳۷:۲۴

On p. ۱۳۳, Vol. ۱۷, of his Al-Mizan, Tabatabai quotes various views regarding what the questioning will be all about. He isays that some scholars are of the opinion that they will be asked about the Unity of Allah, while others believe it will be about the wilayat of Imam Ali (as), but he also concedes that such stopping and questioning will take place on the Sirat over hell.

On p. ۱۰۷ of al-Saduq's Al-Amali, and also on pp. ۶۴-۶۵, Vol. ۸, of al-Majlisi's Bihar al-Anwar, al-Waleed quotes al-Saffar quoting Ibn 'Eisa quoting Muhammad al-Barqi quoting al-Qasim ibn Muhammad al-Jawhari quoting Ali ibn Abu Hamza quoting Au Busayr quoting Abu Abdullah Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) saying, "People will pass on different levels on the Sirat, and it is thinner than hair and sharper than the sword. Some will pass as swiftly as lightning, while others will pass as fast as a horse, while some of them will crawl on it, some will walk on it, while some others will pass hanging, so the fire will consume some of their body parts and leave others."

Imam Abu Ja'far al-Baqir (as) is quoted on

p. ۶۵, Vol. ۸, of al-Majlisi's Bihar al-Anwar saying, "When the verse saying '...and hell is brought that Day' was revealed, the Messenger of Allah (S) was asked about what it meant, so he (S) said, 'The trusted Spirit (Gabriel) has informed me that when Allah, the One and only God, resurrects all people and gathers their early generations and the late ones, hell will be brought by a hundred thousand angels, very stern and mighty angels, and it will be coming roaring, inhaling and exhaling. The force of its exhalation is such that had Allah not delayed them for the reckoning, it would have .caused everyone of them to perish

Then a flame will come out of it and encircle all humans, the good and the bad, so much so that any servant of Allah, be he an angel or a prophet, will call out: 'Save me, O Lord, save me,' except you, O Prophet of Allah, for you will call out: 'Save my nation, O Lord, save my nation!'" Muqatil, 'Ataa and Ibn Abbas are among the greatest traditionists in the history of Islam without any contention. They are the ones who .transmitted the ahadith of the Messenger of Allah (S) for all posterity

All three of them, as stated on p. ۶۷, Vol. ۸, of Bihar al-Anwar, have interpreted the verse saying, "The Day when Allah shall not humiliate the Prophet" to mean: "Allah will not torment the Prophet (that Day, the Day of Judgment)," and the

phrase "and those who believed with him" to mean that He will not torment Ali ibn Abu Talib, Fatima, al-Hassan, al-Husayn, peace be upon them, al-Hamza, and Ja'far, Allah be pleased with them, that "their light runs before them" means "their light shall illuminate the Sirat for Ali and Fatima seventy times more so than light in the life of this world." Their light will then be before them as they continue to cross.

The intensity of their light will be indicative of their iman, conviction. Others will follow. "Members of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) of Muhammad (S) will pass over the Sirat like swift lightning. Then they will be followed by those who will pass like a speedy wind. Then there will be those who will pass as fast as a racing horse.

Then another group of people will pass in a walking pace followed by those who will crawl on their hands and bellies, and finally by those who will crawl on their bellies (with extreme difficulty). Allah will make it wide for the believers and very narrow for the sinners." Then these narrators interpret the verse saying "Lord! Complete our light for us" to mean "complete it for us so that we may be able to pass on the Sirat."

Ibn Shahr Ashub, in his Manaqib Ali ibn Abu Talib, comments, as quoted by al-Majlisi on the same page, saying, "The Commander of the Faithful (as) will pass in a howdah of green emeralds accompanied by Fatima

on a conveyance of red rubies, and she will be surrounded by seventy thousand huris, ".as fast as lightning

On p. ١٨٢ of his Amali, al-Tusi quotes al-Fahham quoting Muhammad ibn al-Hashim al-Hashimi quoting Abu Hashim ibn al-Qasim quoting Muhammad ibn Zakariyya ibn Abdullah quoting Abdullah ibn al-Muthanna quoting Tumamah ibn Abdullah ibn Anas ibn Malik quoting his father quoting his grandfather quoting the Prophet (S) saying, "On the Day of Judgement, the Sirat will be spread over hell. None can pass over it ".(except one who carries a permit admitting the wilaya of Ali ibn Abu Talib (as

Also with reference to the Sirat, Abu Tharr al-Ghifari, may Allah be pleased with him, is quoted by both al-Majlisi on p. ۶٧, Vol. ٨, of his book Bihar al-Anwar, and by al-Kulayni on p. ١۵٢, Vol. ٢, of his Al-Kafi, as saying, "I have heard the Messenger of Allah (S) say, 'The edges of our Sirat on the Day of Judgment will be kindness to the kin and the returning of the trust. When one who is kind to his kin and faithful to his trust passes (over the Sirat), he will make his way to Paradise, but when one who is unfaithful to the trust and severs his ties with his kin passes, none of his good deeds will avail him, "'.and the Sirat will hurl him into hell

There are so many references to noor, divine light, throughout the Holy Qur'an, in the hadith, and in du'a, supplication. It is

the light of guidance whereby the Almighty guides whomseover He pleases both in the life of this fleeting world and in the hereafter. Such light will be most sorely needed .especially in the life hereafter

The reader is reminded that the intensity of his light, be it during the period of the barzakh, when most graves will be almost as dark as hell, during the time when people are judged on the Day of Judgment, or as one passes over the Sirat..., all depends on the depth and sincerity of his conviction, on his iman. No good deeds, no matter how great, will avail him as will his sincere and deep conviction regarding the Unity (Tawhid) and Justice ('Adl) of the Almighty, the truth which He revealed to His prophets (Nubuwwah), and that we will most certainly be resurrected and judged .(Ma'ad), so that one will be either rewarded or punished

There will be no sun in the life hereafter, nor will there be electricity; so, one's own light will be his guiding star. Everything in the life hereafter will have a light of its own; there will be no reflection, nor can one walk in the light of another, nor can one be benevolent and give of his light to another. There will be no giving. The time of giving is right here; so, it is now your golden chance to give your all to your Maker, to worship Him and obey Him as He ought to be worshipped

and obeyed__or at least try; pay Him His dues, and be aware of your responsibilities towards His servants, believing men and women, and to mankind, your extended .family

Give them of what Allah has given you; pray for them; be kind to them; think well of them so that they may think well of you; observe the fast in months other than the month of Ramadhan in order to remind yourself of the hunger from which others, especially indigent Muslims, suffer, and give by way of charity. Otherwise, keep everything to yourself, hoard, treasure, and be damned. Hell is characterized by its darkness, yet its residents will still be able to see things, and what they will see will not please them at all. May Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala keep it away from us, Allahomma .Aameen

Nobody in the entire lengthy history of Arabia (estimated at more than seven thousand and five hundred years) has ever been known to be more courageous and daring when combatting his foes than Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) who was the right hand of the Messenger of Allah (S), the man who single-handedly uprooted the main gate of the fort of Khaybar, a gate so heavy it required forty men to close or open it. Ali (as) once was suffering acutely from an inflammation of the eye, and he was in extreme pain, screaming, the hero that he was. The Messenger of Allah (S) visited him and saw him scream, so he asked him

whether he was suffering from an acute pain or whether it was due to his frustration .and agony

The Imam (as) said, "How intense my pain is! I have never felt such pain..." whereupon the Prophet (S) said to him, "When the angel of death comes to take away the soul of a disbeliever, he brings with him a rod of fire whereby he takes his soul away, whereupon hell itself will scream because of the intensity of his pain and suffering." Having heard him, the Imam (as) stood up then sat and said, "O Messenger of Allah! Please repeat what you have said, for it has made me forget my ".own pain

Then the Imam (as) asked the Messenger of Allah, "Will the soul of any member of your nation be taken away as you have described?" The Prophet (S) answered, "Yes! The soul of an unjust ruler, or of one who consumes the wealth of an orphan, or of one who falsely testifies [will be thus taken away]." The disbeliever referred to in this tradition is one who is unfair to Allah, Glory to Him and Exaltation, regarding one of the commandments which He has required him to uphold, one who does not recognize the Prophethood of Muhammad (S) and his Sunnah or anything required by Islam; .such is the disbeliever

You can reduce the agony of your death, or that of your loved one, by offering charity, fasting, or praying nafl prayers; among such prayers is one in

two rek'ats in each of which you should recite Surat al-Fatiha once and al-Ikhlas .thrice

Fasting either a few days or all of the months of Rajab and Sha'ban, according to your ability, will surely reduce the agony of death and the pain of loneliness in the grave. If you are truly concerned about these matters, and you should be, the month of Ramadhan is your golden opportunity to earn as many blessings as Allah enables you to. It is an opportunity that may not recur, for nobody knows when his/her turn comes .to die

We pray the Almighty to enable us to cross over His Sirat with hardship only in the life of this world, and without any hardship in the life hereafter, to forgive our sins, and to .accept our fast and repentance, Allahomma Aameen

Sharing Iftar with Others

,The Almighty and Praised One has said

O people! You are the ones who stand in need of Allah, while Allah is the self-" .(Sufficient One, the Praised" (Holy Qur'an, ۳۵:۱۵

Islam, which has carried the banner of protecting the poor, the indigent, the orphans, and the wayfarers, has urged the faithful to share the iftar with one another, to visit each other, and to invite others to break their fast with them. Islam, which does not favor an Arab over a non-Arab except on the basis of piety, according to the tradition of His greatest Prophet Muhammad ibn Abdullah (S), has established the fast in order to remind the rich of what the

.poor have to endure

The greatest Prophet Muhammad ibn Abdullah (S) has said, "No poor person feels hungry except due to what another rich one is enjoying." Islam has informed us of all of this through the Islamic code of ethics, I.e., the Holy Qur'an, and through the revered Sunnah of the Prophet (S) and his progeny (as), about whom the greatest Prophet Muhammad (S) has said, "I am leaving among you the Two Weighty Things: the Book of Allah, and my progeny, that is, my family; you shall never go astray so ".long as you follow them both

(The early meal of the Month of Ramadhan (Suhoor

:The Exalted and Praised One has said in His Glorious Book

and eat and drink till the whiteness of the day becomes distinct from the blackness ..." of the night at dawn, then complete the fast till nighttime" (Qur'an Surah Baqarah .(۲:۱۸۷

,He has also said

Little did they sleep during the night, and they sought their Lord's forgiveness in the" .(early hours of the morn" (Holy Qur'an, Surah Dhariyat ۵۱:۱۷-۱۸

,And the Almighty has also said

Those who persevere, and the truthful, and the obedient (to Allah), and those who" spend (benevolently), and those who ask forgiveness during the time of the morn" .((Holy Qur'an, Surah Ale-Imran ۳:۱۷

Suhoor is the meal comprised of food and water taken before daybreak by a Muslim who intends to perform the obligation of the fast. It helps him while abstaining from eating and drinking during daytime. This is the suhoor in its absolute

:meaning. Its timing has been defined by the Almighty thus

and eat and drink till the whiteness of the day becomes distinct from the blackness ..." .(of the night at dawn" (Holy Qur'an, Surah Baqarah ۲:۱۸۷

This means that suhoor can be eaten at any time during the night till a short time before daybreak. But what about this "short time" defined before daybreak? Anas ibn Zaid ibn Thabit, may Allah be pleased with him, once said, "The Prophet (S) ate suhoor with us once, after that he stood for the prayers." He was asked, "What was the length of time from the suhoor till the athan?" He answered, "About the time it takes one to recite fifty Qur'anic verses." This tradition is recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, .and Ibn Khuzaymah

Muhammad ibn Ya’qub quotes Abu Yahya al-San’ani quoting Imam Abu Abdullah al-Sadiq (as) saying, "If a believer fasts and reads Surat al-Qadr during the time of his iftar and suhoor, he will be rewarded with the rewards due to a martyr." This tradition .is recorded on p. ۳۴۴, Vol. ۹۴, of Bihar al-Anwar

The real meaning of suhoor transcends the physical and nutritious benefits with which it provides the person who observes the fast. Quoting what the Almighty has said :explains the real meaning of suhoor

Little do they sleep during the night, and they seek their Lord's forgiveness in the" .(early hours of the morn" (Holy Qur'an, Surah Dhariyat ۵۱:۱۷-۱۸

,He has also said

The patient, and the truthful, and the"

obedient (to Allah), and those who spend (benevolently), and those who ask .(forgiveness during the time of the morn" (Holy Qur'an, Surah Ale-Imran ٣:١٧

The first verse tells us that nighttime is the time for sleep, and the zenith of times to adore the Almighty and seek His forgiveness is during the suhoor the plural of which is ashar. The second verse contains the definition of the status of those who seek their Lord's forgiveness during the ashar times, a status which is quite lofty and is compared only to those to whom the Almighty refers as "those who persevere, and the truthful, and the obedient (to Allah)." We may derive the following conclusions :from the above-quoted verses

The time of suhoor has its own status and function which transcends eating and (١ drinking, which help the fasting person during his daytime abstention from both, and .this function is to wake up during the night to perform an act of worship

The epic of adoration and the seeking of His forgiveness, which the Almighty, out of (٢ His divine wisdom, has decreed, is during the time of ashar; otherwise, why has He not specified other periods during which His servants adore Him during the glorious ?month of Ramadhan

Allah, the Almighty, has granted those who seek His forgiveness during the times of (٣ ashar a status which comes out of His blessing, and He includes them among those whom He describes as "those who persevere, and the truthful, and the obedient (to ".(Allah

Probably

one of the greatest blessings of the Almighty is that He has included those who eat their suhoor among those who shall receive His forgiveness so that they will be the ones freed by the Most Merciful One from the fire during the month of the Glorious Qur'an. The commander of the faithful Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib, peace be

upon him, quotes the holy Prophet (S) saying, "Allah, the Praised and the Exalted, and His angels send blessings unto those who take their suhoor meal and seek His forgiveness; so, let each one of you observe suhoor even by drinking some water."(١)

Ali ibn Muhammad, quoting al-Nawfali who quotes al-Sukooni who quotes Ja'far who in turn quotes his forefathers, Allah's blessings and peace be upon them all, has cited the Messenger of Allah (S) saying, "There is a great deal of bliss in three things: the congregational prayers, the dish of sopped bread and meat (thireed), and the suhoor."(٢)

Prophet Muhammad (S), as recorded on pages ١٠۶٣-١٠۶۴ of Sahih al-Targheeb wal Tarheeb, has also said, "The best a believer can eat during the suhoor is dates; but if he cannot do so, then let him at least drink some water".

Prayer during the Glorious month of Ramadhan

As regarding prayers during the nights of the month of Ramadhan, these are documented by al-Kaf'ami in Vol. ٢ of his Misbah. On pp. ۶۵٧-۶۶٠, he cites al-Shaheed's book on the forty ahadith which quotes the Prophet (S) saying that whoever says his prayers during the first night

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١- This is also recorded as hadith number ٣۵٧٧ in Sahih al Jami' al Saghir, and hadith number ١٠۶٢ in Sahih al-Targheeb wal Tarheeb.

٢- This is hadith number ١٠۵٧ among the hadiths of Sahih al-Targheeb wal Tarheeb, and hadith number ١٠۴۵ among the "Series of sahih hadiths".

of the month of Ramadhan, reciting the Fatiha once and the chapter of Tawheed) (Unity, Chapter ١١٢) twenty-five times, will receive the rewards of all those who were foremost in testifying to the truth of Allah's prophets and those who sacrificed their lives for Allah's cause; moreover, all his sins will be forgiven, and he will on the Day of .Judgment be among the winners

Anyone who says his prayers during the second night, repeating the Fatiha four times and the Qadr twenty times, will have all his sins forgiven and his sustenance .(increased, and he will be regarded as one who followed the Sunnah of the Prophet (S

Anyone who says his prayers during the third night repeating the Fatiha ten times and the Chapter of Ikhlas fifty times will be addressed on the Day of Resurrection and told that Allah has set him free from the fire, and seven gates of heaven will be opened for him. Whoever spends the entire night saying optional prayers will have all his sins .forgiven

Anyone who says his prayers during the fourth night reciting the Fatiha once and the Qadr twenty times, his deeds will be presented before Allah together with those of His prophets. Whoever says his prayers during the fifth night making two rek'ats while reciting the Fatiha once and the Chapter of Tawheed fifty times, once he sends salutations unto the Prophet (S) and his progeny a hundred times, will be beside the Prophet (S) as he enters

.Paradise

Anyone who says his prayers during the sixth night reciting the Fatiha four times and Tabarak once will be regarded as though he were doing so during the Night of Destiny (Lailatul-Qadr). Whoever says his prayers during the seventh night reciting the Fatiha once and the Qadr thirteen times, the Almighty will build him in the Garden of Eden a .mansion of gold and he will be in security from Allah's Wrath till the next year

Anyone who says his prayers during the eighth night making two rek'ats in which he recites the Fatiha once and the chapter of Tawheed eleven times, then when he sends salutations unto the Prophet (S) and his progeny he praises the Almighty a thousand times, the gates of Paradise will be opened for him to enter from whichever .he wishes

Anyone who says his prayers during the ninth night reciting during the time from sunset till nighttime the Fatiha once and ayat al-Kursi seven times, sending salutations unto the Prophet (S) and his progeny fifty times, his deeds will be raised as those of the siddeeqs, the martyrs, and the righteous. Whoever says his prayers during the tenth night for twenty rek'ats, repeating the Fatiha once and the Tawheed thirty-one times, Allah will expand his sustenance and he will be (on the Day of .Resurrection) among the winners

Whoever says two rek'ats during the eleventh night, reciting the Fatiha once and .Surat al-Kawthar twenty times, all his sins will be forgiven that day

Whoever says his prayers during the twelfth night eight times, reciting the Fatiha once and the Qadr thirty times, will be granted the rewards of those who have thanked Allah as He ought to be thanked, and he will be regarded on the Day of .Resurrection as one of those who persevered

Whoever says his prayers during the thirteenth night in four rek'ats, reciting the Fatiha once and the Tawheed twenty-five times, will pass on the right path (al-Sirat) as swiftly as lightning. Whoever says his prayers during the fourteenth night six times, reciting the Fatiha once and the Zalzala thirty times, Allah will make the hours of .death, and [his being questioned by] both Munkir and Nakeer, easy for him

Whoever says his prayers during the fifteenth night in four rek'ats, repeating in the first two of them, after reciting the Fatiha, the chapter of Tawheed a hundred times, and after the Fatiha of the other two the Tawheed fifty times, will be granted what nobody knows except Allah. Whoever says his prayers during the sixteenth night in twelve rek'ats, reciting the Fatiha once and the Takathur twelve times will leave his grave like one whose thirst has been quenched, repeating the shahada till he reaches .Paradise and enters it without reckoning

Whoever says his prayers during the seventeenth night in two rek'ats, reciting in the first one the Fatiha and whatever he wishes after it, and in the second the Fatiha once ,and the Tawheed one hundred times

then, after having sent salutations unto the Prophet (S) and his progeny, acknowledging the unity of his Lord (I.e., by saying: La ilaha illa-Allah!) a hundred times, will be granted the rewards of performing the pilgrimage a million times, and the rewards of a million 'umras, and the rewards of a million ghazwas. Whoever says his prayers during the eighteenth night in four rek'ats reciting the Fatiha once and the Kawthar twenty-five times, the angel of death will bring him the glad tidings that the .Almighty is pleased with him

Whoever says his prayers during the nineteenth night fifty times, reciting the Fatiha once and the Zalzala fifty times, will be regarded as though he had performed the pilgrimage and the 'umra a hundred times, and Allah will accept all his deeds. Anyone who performs his prayers during the twentieth night in eight rek'ats reciting whatever Qur'anic chapters he wishes, his sins will be forgiven. Anyone who says his prayers during the twenty-first night in eight rek'ats reciting whatever he pleases, the gates of heaven will be opened for him, and his plea will be answered, and he will have even more rewards from Allah. Whoever says his prayers during the twenty-second night in eight rek'ats, reciting whatever he pleases, will be regarded as one who performed .both hajj and 'umra

Anyone who performs his prayers during the twenty-fifth night in eight rek'ats, reciting in each the Fatiha once and the Tawheed ten times, Allah will grant him the rewards

of the pious. Whoever says his prayers during the twenty-seventh night in four rek'ats reciting the Fatiha once and Tabarak once, but if he does not memorize Tabarak, then let him recite the Fatiha twenty-five times, he and his parents will be .forgiven

Anyone who says his prayers during the twenty-eighth night in six rek'ats reciting the Fatiha once and ten times Surat al-Kursi, al-Kawthar and al-Tawheed, then after he sends salutations unto the Prophet (S) and his progeny a hundred times, he will surely be forgiven. Whoever says his prayers during the twenty-ninth night in two rek'ats reciting the Fatiha once and Tawheed twenty times will receive mercy, and his book of reckoning will be raised to 'illiyyeen. Whoever says his prayers during the thirtieth night in twelve rek'ats reciting the Fatiha once and the Tawheed twenty times, his deeds will be sealed with mercy from Allah after he sends salutations unto the .Prophet (S) and his progeny a hundred times

Ghusl

Lailatul-Qadr is one of the last ten nights of the month of Ramadhan. Al-Majlisi, on p. ۱۰, Vol. ۹۴, of his Bihar al-Anwar, quotes Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) saying the following about it: "Seek it in the last ten days, for the mash'ars are seven, and so are ".the heavens, and the (layers of the) earth, and seven kine, and seven ears of grain

He (as) is also quoted saying that during those days, the Messenger of Allah (S) used to roll his bed, tie

his mantle, and keep his family awake (especially) during the ۲۳rd night, sprinkling water on the faces of those who were overcome by sleep. Fatima al-Zahra (as) used not to permit anyone in her house to sleep, giving them very little to eat (since over-eating causes drowsiness and heaviness), and she used to get ready for it even .during daytime

She (as) used to say, "One who is deprived of its goodness truly suffers the greatest deprivation." It is highly recommended, therefore, to perform ghusul particularly during the last ten days of the month of Ramadhan. According to Al-Iqbal, Abu Abdullah, peace be upon him, is quoted saying that the Messenger of Allah (S) used to .have his ghusul each night during the last ten nights of the month of Ramadhan

(The Night of Destiny (Lailatul-Qadr

The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted on page ۲۶۵, Vol. ۳, of al-Amin's work Muftahul Jannat, saying, "Allah has favored Friday over all other days, the month of Ramadhan over all other months, and the Night of Destiny (Lailatul-Qadr) over all other nights." And Allah has favored the Holy Qur'an over all other Books which He revealed. Ibrahim, one of the companions of Imam Abu Abdullah al-Sadiq (as), is quoted on p. ۲۵, Vol. ۹۴, of Bihar al-Anwar, saying that he once asked the Imam (as) about how the Holy Qur'an was revealed during Lailatul-Qadr, knowing that it took more than twenty .years to reveal

The Imam (as) answered by saying, "The Holy Qur'an was revealed as

a whole during the month of Ramadhan at the Ancient House (the Ka'ba), then from there it was revealed along the span of (more than) twenty years." Then he cited the Messenger of Allah (S) saying, "The Books of Ibrahim (as) were revealed on the first night of the month of Ramadhan; the Torah was revealed on the sixth of the month of Ramadhan; the Gospel (Injil) was revealed on the thirteenth of the month of Ramadhan; the Psalms (Zabur) were revealed on the eighteenth of the month of Ramadhan, and the Holy Qur'an was revealed on the twenty-fourth of the month of .Ramadhan." This tradition is also recorded on p. ٨٠, Vol. ١, of al-'Ayyashi's Tafsir

This name was used for Lailatul-Qadr because Allah Almighty determines in it for everyone all what will happen the entire next year. The "Qadr" in this sense means destiny. According to al-Qummi's Tafsir, as explained on p. ۴۳۲ of its second volume, such destiny includes life and death, sustenance, abundance of crops or famine, and everything good or bad. This means that Allah the Glorified and Exalted determines in this night each and every event to occur during the next year to any and all of His .creation

Al-Majlisi quotes his father on p. ١٢, Vol. ٩۴, of his own Bihar al-Anwar quoting al-Nadar quoting Yahya al-Halabi quoting Ibn Maskan quoting Imam Abu Abdullah al-Sadiq (as) saying, "During Lailatul-Qadr, the angels, the spirit, and the trusted scribes all descend to the lower heavens and write

down whatever Allah decrees that year, and if Allah wishes to advance something or postpone it or add thereto, He orders the angel to erase it and replace it with whatever He decrees." This is also confirmed by al-Qummi in his renown Tafsir, .exegesis of the Holy Qur'an

On p. ١٨٢, Vol. ١, of 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida, and on p. ١۴, Vol. ٩۴, of Bihar al-Anwar, Ja'far ibn Ali ibn Ahmed quotes al-Hassan ibn Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Sadaqah quotes Muhammad son of 'Umar ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz quoting al-Hassan ibn Muhammad al-Nawfali quoting Sulayman al-Marzawi asking Imam al-Rida (as), "Could you please tell us why the Chapter of Qadr was revealed?" The Imam (as) said, "O Sulayman! Lailatul-Qadr is the night when Allah, the most Exalted, the most Great, decrees what will take place from one year to another of life or death, good or evil, or regarding ".sustenance, and whatever He then decrees is sure destiny

On p. ٣١۵ of Ma'ani al-Akhbar, and also on p. ١٨, Vol. ٩۴, of Bihar al-Anwar, Ibn Musa quotes Ibn Zakariyya citing Muhammad ibn al-Abbas quoting Muhammad ibn al-Sary quoting Ahmed ibn Abdullah ibn Yunus quoting Ibn Tareef quoting Ibn Nubatah quoting Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) saying, "The Messenger of Allah (S) asked me once, 'O Ali! Do you know the implication of Lailatul-Qadr?' I said, 'No, indeed, O Messenger of Allah!' He (S) said, 'Allah, the Praised One, the Most Glorified, decreed in it what will take place till the Day of

Judgment, and among what He, the most Exalted, the Most Great, decreed was your own Imamate and Wilayat and the Imamate and Wilayat of your offspring till the Day ".of Resurrection

Both Ma'ani al-Akhbar and Bihar al-Anwar quote Sa'd citing the great traditionist Abdullah son of 'Umar ibn al-Khattab quoting Muhammad ibn 'Ubayd ibn Mahran quoting Salih quoting Salih ibn 'Uqbah quoting al-Fadl ibn 'Uthman saying, "When the Chapter of Qadr was mentioned in the presence of Abu Abdullah Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as), he was asked about its merits over other chapters, and he said, 'It was revealed with reference to the Wilayat of the Commander of the Faithful (Imam Ali) (as).' He (as) was asked, 'Do you mean Lailatul-Qadr for which we look in anticipation during the month of Ramadhan?' He (as) said, 'Yes; it is the night in which the heavens and the earth were determined, and the Wilayat of the Commander of the Faithful (as) "'.was decreed

Ahmed ibn Muhammad and Ahmed ibn Ishaq, as recorded on p. ۲۱, Vol. ۹۴, of Bihar al-Anwar, quote al-Qasim ibn Yahya quoting others citing Imam Abu Abdullah (as) saying that Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) quite often used to say, "We saw the Messenger of Allah (S) once in the company of al-Taymi and a friend of his while the latter was reciting Chapter al-Qadr. He (S) was profoundly moved and he kept weeping to the extent that he (S) was asked, 'How so deeply moved by this Chapter your heart

'!is

He (S) said, 'My heart is deeply impressed because of what my eyes had witnessed, and what my mind had comprehended, and because of what the heart of this man [meaning Ali (as)] will go through after me.' Both men asked the Messenger of Allah (S), 'Did you really see all of that?! And what will he (Ali) see?' He (S) would then recite the verse saying, 'The angels and the Spirit descend therein with the permission of '.their Lord for every affair; peace, it is, till the break of the morn

Then he (S) would pause and ask them, 'Is there anything left after the Almighty having verbally said 'every affair'?' They would both answer in the negative, and he (S) would then ask them, 'Do you both know regarding whom it is revealed?' They '!would both say, 'No, by Allah, O Messenger of Allah

He (S) would then say, 'Yes; is there going to be a Lailatul-Qadr after me (I.e., after my demise)?' They would answer in the affirmative, and he (S) would then ask them, 'Will every affair descend therein?' They said: 'Yes.' He then asked them, 'To whom will it descend?' They answered, 'We do not know.' He (S), with his hand on my head, pushed me gently forward and said, 'If you do not know, then it is regarding this person after me.' Both men, ever since the demise of the Messenger of Allah (S), used to be filled with awe whenever that night

".approached'

,The Almighty says

.(Therein every wise affair is made distinct" (۴۴:۴"

This means that in this night, the Exalted One decrees everything that will happen next year. It is also said in Arabic that someone has a "qadr," a social status or a certain prestige, which he enjoys among people. The "Qadr" in this sense, therefore, .also connotes prestige and significance

The Almighty also says in the Holy Qur'an, "They did not honor Allah as He ought to be honored," that is, they did not glorify Him as He ought to be glorified; thus, "qadr" in this verse implies glorification. Lailatul-Qadr, then, is the great night which enjoys a great deal of prestige and high esteem with Allah and in which He determines and decrees the fate and sustenance of all His creation. It has a special status simply because obedience to Him during it is regarded with great seriousness and urgency, .and a great reward awaits those who honor the month wherein it falls

It is also said that it was so named because a Book from Allah which enjoys greatness of status was revealed to a Prophet who also enjoys a great honor and prestige. Another view is that it was named so because the earth becomes straitened due to the number of angels on it. "Qadr," according to this view, carries the meaning of straitness due to the fact that the Almighty has said "... and whoever He decides to .straiten his sustenance...," and Allah knows best

The Almighty

has addressed His servant and Messenger, our master, Muhammad (S), saying, "And what will make you comprehend what Lailatul-Qadr is? Lailatul-Qadr is better than a thousand months;" that is, "How would you know the greatness, significance, and "?sanctity of this night which I have decreed to be better than a thousand months

There are indications that the Holy Qur'an was revealed as a whole to the Messenger :(S). In the Holy Qur'an, we read

Haa, Meem. By the Book that makes (the truth) manifest, surely We revealed it on a" ,(blessed night" (Surah Dhukhan ۴۴:۱-۳

,and also

.(Surely We revealed it on Lailatul-Qadr" (Surah Bayyinnah ۹۸:۱"

Ibn Abbas is quoted saying, "The Holy Qur'an was revealed as a whole from the Safeguarded Scroll from the heavens to the lower earth on Lailatul-Qadr, then Gabriel (as) used to reveal it unto Muhammad (S) gradually." It is well known that the Holy Qur'an was revealed unto the Messenger of Allah (S) in installments during a period of twenty-three years. The first chapter revealed unto the Messenger of Allah (S) at the Cave of Hira was the Chapter of al-'Alaq when Gabriel said to him: "(O Muhammad!) Read!" He (S) said: "I cannot read." He repeated, "Read!" Again the Prophet (S) said, "I ,cannot read." So he said once more

,(Read in the Name of your Lord Who created..." (Surah Alaq ۹۶:۱"

up to the end of the chapter. The last verse of the Glorious Book of Allah revealed :unto the Messenger (S) was

Today"

have I completed for you your religion, perfected My blessing unto you, and accepted .(Islam as your religion" (Surah Maida ۵:۳

Thus, suffices this blessed night the honor and dignity of being particularly chosen by the Glorified and Exalted One for the revelation of His Glorious Qur'an which is the .shining and guiding light of the religion of Islam and the constitution of its adherents

Why is Lailatul-Qadr better than a thousand months? Why not better than ten or a hundred thousands?! Al-Qummi indicates on page ۴۳۲, Vol. ۲, of his Tafsir, that the Messenger of Allah (S) once saw in a vision monkeys climbing over his pulpit, and he felt very distressed; thereupon, the chapter of Qadr was revealed to remove his distress. The period of Banu Umayyad's government lasted roughly a thousand months: from ۶۶۱ to ۷۵۰ A.D., with the first ruler being Abu Sufyan and the last .Mu'awiyah al-Himar

Both al-Kulayni in his Al-Kafi and al-Majlisi in his Bihar al-Anwar quote Ahmed ibn Muhammad quoting Ali ibn al-Hassan quoting Muhammad ibn al-Walid and Muhammad ibn Ahmed quoting Yunus ibn Ya'qub quoting Ali ibn 'Eisa al-Qammat quoting his uncle quoting Imam Abu Abdullah al-Sadiq (as) saying, "The Messenger of Allah (S) was shown in a vision how Banu Umayyah climbed over his pulpit (like monkeys climb over trees), so he felt very unhappy, whereupon Gabriel (as) .descended upon him and asked him why he was so forlorn

He (S) said, 'I have seen (in a vision) tonight Banu Umayya

ascending my pulpit after having misled people from the Straight Path.' Gabriel (as) ,said

I swear by the One Who has sent me (as a messenger) with the truth, this is‘ something with which I am not familiar.' Having said so, he ascended to the heavens. After a short while, he brought him one verse to remove thereby his grief; it said: ‘Have you considered if We would let them enjoy themselves for (a few) years, then that with which they are threatened comes to them, so much so that whatever they were permitted to enjoy shall not avail them (in the least)?' (Holy Qur'an, Surah .(Shu’ara ۲۶:۲۰۵-۲۰۷

And he also brought him: ‘We revealed it in Lailatul-Qadr, and what will make you comprehend what Lailatul-Qadr is? Lailatul-Qadr is better than a thousand months..., "'.etc

Lailatul-Qadr is a blessed night also because the Almighty brings down during it goodness, bliss, and forgiveness for His servants. One tradition of the greatest of all prophets Muhammad ibn Abdullah (S) states that when Lailatul-Qadr approaches, the Almighty orders Gabriel (as) to descend accompanied by a crowd of angels to the .earth with a green banner

He would mount the banner atop the Ka’ba while having six hundred wings one of which is not spread except on Lailatul-Qadr; so, he would spread them during that night, and he and all other angels would greet everyone who is standing for his prayers, sitting, adoring, or reciting the Holy Qur'an. They would shake hands with them and

pray the Almighty to accept their pleas, and they would continue doing so till .daybreak

It is then that they would ask Gabriel: "What has the Almighty Allah done with the wishes of the believers among the nation of Muhammad (S)?" He would answer, "The Almighty Allah has looked upon them on this night and forgiven them, all of them, except the following: one who is addicted to drinking, one who severs his ties with his ".kin, and one who is a trouble-maker

The Almighty has said, "Lailatul-Qadr is better than a thousand months," meaning, mathematically, that this night, which is comprised of a few hours, is honored by Allah the Exalted and Praised over about eighty-three years which is the equivalent of a thousand months. The Umayyads fought Islam since its inception, then they fought .the family of the Prophet (S), that is, Ahl al-Bayt, the whole time they were in power

The first self-declared Umayyad ruler was Abu Sufyan, and the last was Mu'awiya al-Himar. If you trace the period extending from the first year during which Abu Sufyan forced his authority on the Muslims until the Umayyad lost grip over power, you will come to a figure equivalent to a thousand months. It is as if the Holy Qur'an is saying that one night in the sight of Allah is better than all the thousand months those corrupt .Umayyads ruled the Muslim masses by sheer force

The Almighty has also said, "Peace, it is, till the break of the

morn," that is, "Lailatul-Qadr is a night of peace and tranquility against all evils, tribulations, and the mischief of the devils. No evil can take place during it, nor can a demon practice his evil designs. It is peace for the devotees who are greeted whenever they are met by the angels. The angels greet them and greet you, O Muhammad, and so does My Spirit, since the moment they descend from heavens ".and till the time of daybreak

According to the book titled al-Iqbal which cites Kanzul Yawaqeet by Abul-Fadl ibn Muhammad al-Harwi, the Prophet (S) has said, "Whoever remains awake during Lailatul-Qadr and spends it in adoration will have his penalty postponed till the next year." According to the same reference, the Prophet (S) says that Moses (as) once addressed the Almighty saying, "Lord! I desire to be near to You." The Almighty said, "Whoever desires nearness to Me is one who remains awake during Lailatul-Qadr ".((worshipping Me

He said, "Lord! I wish to earn Your mercy." The Almighty said, "My mercy is granted to anyone who is merciful to the indigent during Lailatul-Qadr." He said, "Lord! I wish to pass on the right path." He said, "This is granted to anyone who spends alms during Lailatul-Qadr." He said, "Lord! I wish to enjoy the trees and fruits of Paradise!" The ".Almighty said, "This is granted to anyone who praises Me during Lailatul-Qadr

He said, "Lord! I wish to achieve salvation from the fire!" He said, "This is granted

to anyone who seeks forgiveness during Lailatul-Qadr." He said, "Lord! I wish to achieve Your pleasure!" The Almighty said, "I shall be pleased with anyone who prays ".two (optional) rek'ats during Lailatul-Qadr

The same book quotes the Holy Prophet (S) saying that the gates of heaven will be opened during Lailatul-Qadr; every devotee who performs prayers during it will receive a tree in Paradise for each prostration he makes, a tree under whose shade a rider may keep riding for a hundred years without leaving its shade. And he will receive for each rek'a a mansion in Paradise of pearls, sapphires, chrysolites and diamonds. For each verse he recites he will receive one of the crowns of Paradise. The .tradition is lengthy and it contains quite a generous reward indeed

Al-Dooryasti, in Kitab al-Husna, relying on the authority of Abu Ja'far al-Jawad who quotes his forefathers quoting Imam al-Baqir, peace be upon all of them, the Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that whoever spends Lailatul-Qadr adoring his Lord will have all his sins forgiven even if they had numbered as many as the stars in the heavens, the weight of the mountains, or the measures of the seas. Al-Harwi .reported a similar tradition which is recorded in Kanz al-Yawaqeet

Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him and his father, is quoted on page ۵۳۵۱ of Al-Sahih al-Jami' citing the Messenger of Allah (S) saying, "Lailatul-Qadr is easy, airy, neither very hot nor very cold; the sun rises on its morning

colored pale red." The Messenger of Allah (S) is also quoted saying, "At the morning of Lailatul-Qadr, the sun rises without rays, looking like a washbowl, till it is high." This tradition is reported by Muslim and al-Tirmithi. The Messenger of Allah (S) is also reported saying, "Lailatul-Qadr is a serene night, neither hot nor cold, and no comet is ".hurled during it. One of the signs of its advent is that the sun rises without a ray

Zad al-Ma'ad quotes a few scholars who believe in its perpetuity, indicating that some of them say that it is at the conclusion of the year; therefore, it has to be observed during all nights of the year so that one of them will be it. Others say that it is in Sha'ban and the month of Ramadhan, while still others say that it is the night of the .middle of Sha'ban

Others say that it is the beginning of the month of Ramadhan, while others say it is the middle of it; yet others say it is the seventeenth. Still others say it is the twenty-ninth of it, while others say it is the last night of it, and most Sunnis of our time are of the view that it is the twenty-seventh. This proves that the reason why it was not .determined exactly is due to the purpose of observing the entire month

On Lailatul-Qadr did the night journey (israa) to heavens take place, and the Almighty raised Jesus son of Mary

as) to Him. On it, His servant and prophet Moses (as) died, and so did Joshua son of) Noon, the wasi of Moses, peace be upon both of them. Also on it was the commander .of the faithful Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) martyred

Relying on the authority of Abu Ja'far, peace be upon him, a few narrators of hadith have indicated that the Prophet (S) had been asked once about the Night of Destiny (Lailatul-Qadr). So he ascended the pulpit and, having praised the Almighty, he (S) said, "You have asked me about the Night of Destiny. I have not concealed the .knowledge of it from you out of my ignorance thereof

Be informed, O people, that whoever during the month of Ramadhan is healthy, and he fasts during its days and performs prayers during a portion of its nights and is punctual regarding the obligatory prayers, and makes an effort to attend congregational prayers on Fridays during it and attends the Eid prayers as well, he will then have honored the Night of Destiny duly, and he will receive his reward from the ".Creator

Do you need any more clues regarding the greatness of Lailatul-Qadr? Then let us tell you that the authors of Thawab al-A'mal and Bihar al-Anwar have cited the son of al-Mutawakkil quoting Muhammad al-Attar quoting al-Ash'ari quoting Muhammad ibn Hassan quoting Ibn Mahran quoting al-Bataini quoting his father quoting Abu Busayr quoting Imam Abu Abdullah al-Sadiq (as), the men whose truthfulness is not doubted even

by the most skeptic scholar, saying that whoever recites Surat al-'Ankabut (The Spider) and Surat al-Rum (Romans) during the ٢٣rd night of the month of Ramadhan will secure admission into Paradise without any exception. On p. ١٩, Vol. ٩۴, of Bihar al-Anwar, the Imam (as) is quoted adding, "I do not fear lest Allah should record that I have committed a sin for having said s; surely these two Chapters enjoy a great ".status with Allah

?Which Night is Lailatul–Qadr

Is it the ١٧th or the ١٩th? Imam Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn Ali-al-Baqir (as) is quoted in Bihar al-Anwar and Da'aim al-Islam as having said, "The ١٧th night of the month of Ramadhan is when the two parties met, and the ١٩th is when the lists of the pilgrims is written down, and the ٢١st is when successors to the Prophets passed away and Jesus Christ (as) was raised to heaven and Moses (as) passed away, whereas the ٢٣rd ".is hoped to be Lailatul-Qadr

Both al-'Ayyashi's Tafsir and al-Majlisi's Bihar al-Anwar quote 'Amr ibn Sa'eed saying, "A man from Medina disagreed with me regarding the night (Lailatul-Qadr) when the two hosts meet, saying that it was the night of the ١٧th of the month of Ramadhan, so I went to see Abu Abdullah (as) and told him about our disagreement, whereupon he (as) said, 'The man from Medina did not say the truth; I know that you mean it is the ,١٩th when the Commander of the Faithful (Imam Ali, as) was wounded

".and it is the same night when Jesus son of Mary (as) was raised to heavens

Both references quote Humran quoting Abu Abdullah Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) saying, "The destiny referred to as Lailatul-Qadr is the same destiny referred to in another verse (of Surat al-A'raf) wherein the most Exalted One says: 'When their doom is come, they shall not remain behind in the least, nor will they go before' (Holy ".(Qur'an, ٧:٣۴

Or is it the ٢١st or the ٢٣rd? Al-Husayn ibn 'Ubaydullah, according to Majalis al-Shaykh, as quoted on p. ٢, Vol. ٩۴, of Bihar al-Anwar, quotes Ahmed ibn Muhammad ibn Yahya who in turn quotes his father saying, "I was in the company of Abu Abdullah (as) when Abu Busayr asked him, 'Which night is the one when one is to plead to his Lord whatever he wishes to plead?' The Imam (as) answered him by saying, 'Either the '.twenty-first or the twenty-third

He then asked him (as), 'What if I have no strength to observe both of them?' The Imam (as) said, 'How easy it is to observe them when compared to your pleas!'" Abu Abdullah (as) is also quoted in the same volume of Bihar al-Anwar saying, "The twenty-third night of the month of Ramadhan is the one when every weighty matter is decided, when trials, tribulations, deaths, and means of sustenance and other matters are determined, and so will whatever Allah decrees to take place for the entire next year; so, congratulations to anyone who

remains awake during it bowing, prostrating, contemplating upon his sins, weeping on their account, for if you do all of that, God willing, you will never be disappointed."

Then he added, "Allah will order an angel to call out during each and every day of the month of Ramadhan conveying Allah's message to them thus: 'Good news, O My servants! I have forgiven your past sins and permitted some of you to intercede on behalf of the rest on Lailatul-Qadr except those who break their fast with an intoxicant or those who bear grudge against another Muslim brother!'" It is narrated that Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala wards off evil and sins and all types of trials on the ۲۵th night from all His servants who fast and grants them light in their hearing and vision; Paradise is decorated during Lailatul-Qadr's day and night.

The great Sunni scholar Ibn Abul-Hadid, in his commentary on Nahjul Balagha, cites Ibn Durayd's Amali stating that al-Jarmoothi quotes Ibn al-Muhallabi quoting Ibn al-Kalbi quoting Shaddad ibn Ibrahim quoting 'Ubaydullah ibn al-Hassan al-Fahri quoting Ibn 'Aradah saying, "The Commander of the Faithful (as) was once asked about Lailatul-Qadr, and he said, 'It is not at all improbable that I know which night it is and deliberately hide such knowledge, and I do not at all doubt that Allah hid such knowledge from you only out of His love for you, for if you knew which night it is, you would have honored it and left the others,

".and I hope you will not err in its regard

Recommended Deeds for each Night of the Last Ten Nights of the Month

These are many; among them is what is recommended by the Prophet (S) who has said: "Whoever prays two rek'as on Lailatul-Qadr and recites the Fatiha once in each rek'a and the Tawheed seven times, then when he finishes he seeks forgiveness seventy times, then he adds, 'I seek Allah's forgiveness and to Him do I repent,' by the time he leaves his place, Allah will have forgiven him and his parents and sent angels to record good deeds for him for another year, and He would send angels to plant trees for him in Paradise and build him mansions and draw rivers, and he would not ".leave the life of this world before seeing all what is in store for him in Paradise

Another recommended deed is ghusul (ceremonial bath) which is highly recommended and emphasized especially during the last three nights (of the month), and the best time to take it is after sunset prayers. And speaking of ghusul, it is recommended, as the Prophet of Islam (S) had himself done, to stay away from .women during these most sacred days but to approach them in the first ۲۰ days

As a matter of fact, p. ۱۸۰, Vol. ۴, of al-Kulayni's Al-Kafi, p. ۳۴۸, Vol. ۹۴, of al-Majlisi's Bihar al-Anwar, and p. ۱۱۲, Vol. ۲, of Ibn Babawayh's work Man la yahduru al-faqih all suggest that it is highly recommended to approach women particularly during the first nights

of the month of Ramadhan. These classic books quote the Commander of the Faithful (as) saying that it is recommended for a believer to cohabit with his wife (particularly) during the first night of this sacred month.

Another recommended deed is what is called the "plea by the sanctity of the Holy Qur'an" which is reported on the authority of both Imams al-Baqir and al-Sadiq, peace be upon them, who have said, "You must take the Holy Qur'an during those last three nights of the month of Ramadhan, open it, then put it on your hands and say: ‘Lord! I plead to You by Your revealed Book and everything in it, and in it is Your great Name and the most sublime attributes. I plead to You to send blessings unto Muhammad (S) and the progeny of Muhammad (S) and to free me from the bondage of the fire,' then you ask Allah whatever you wish."

Imam al-Sadiq (as) is quoted saying, "Take the Holy Qur'an, put it on your head and say, ‘Lord! By the grace of this Holy Qur'an and to whom You have revealed it, and by every believer You have praised therein, and by Your right upon them, for none knows Your right more than You!'

Then you repeat ten times each of the following: ‘By Your Grace, O Mighty God! By Muhammad, by Ali, by Fatima, by al-Hassan, by al-Hussain, by Ali ibn al-Hussain, by Muhammad ibn Ali, by Ja’far ibn Muhammad, by Mousa ibn Ja’far,

by Ali ibn Mousa, by Muhammad ibn Ali, by Ali ibn Muhammad, by al-Hassan ibn Ali, by al-Hujja (al-Mahdi),' then you state your plea, and Allah will help you attain your objective if He pleases." Another special invocation quoted from the Prophet (S) says:

I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the One and Only God, without a" partner, and that Muhammad (S) is His servant and messenger. I bear witness that Paradise is right and that the fire is right, and that the hour is approaching, there is no doubt about it, and that Allah shall bring life to those in the graves. I further bear witness that the Lord is my God: there is no partner with Him, nor a son, nor a father, and I bear witness that He does whatever He pleases and is able to do everything and is the Doer of what He wills.

He humiliates whomsoever He wills and raises whomsoever He pleases, Owner of the domain, Sustainer of the servants, the Forgiving, the Mercy-giving, the Omniscient, the Kind. I bear witness again and again and again and again and again and again and again that You, Lord, are exactly so and even more, and that none can describe Your greatness. Lord! I pray You to send blessings unto Muhammad (S) and the progeny of Muhammad (S) and to guide me and not to leave me to stray after having guided me, for You guide whomsoever You please."

Recommended Deeds for the Twenty-Third Night of the Month of Ramadhan

All recommended

deeds stated above are also recommended for this night and for all the nights referred to above one of which, according to the above-quoted traditions, Lailatul-Qadr may as well be. On all these nights, it is recommended that you perform the ghusul twice: once at the beginning of the night, and once at its end as Imam al-Sadiq, peace be upon him, is quoted saying. It is also recommended that you read the .Chapter of the Holy Qur'an dealing with the Romans and the one with the Spider

Imam al-Sadiq, peace be upon him, has told Abu Baseer that whoever recites both chapters of al-'Ankaboot (Spider) and al-Room (Romans) on the twenty-third night of the month of Ramadhan will certainly be among the residents of Paradise without any exception, adding, "... and I do not fear that Allah will record a sin against me for giving such a status for these two Chapters." It is also recommended to recite the Dukhkhan .(Smoke) Chapter too

Imam Ali, peace be upon him, has said, "Everything has a fruit, and the fruit of the Holy Qur'an is the Qadr Chapter. Everything has a treasure, and the treasure that removes poverty is the Qadr Chapter. For everything there is a means whereby it can be attained, and the means of the weak is the Qadr Chapter. For every hardship there .is ease, and the ease of those suffering from hardship is the Qadr Chapter

There is a shield against everything evil, and the shield of the

believers is the Qadr Chapter. For everything there is guidance, and the guidance of the righteous is the Qadr Chapter. There is excellence for everything, and the excellence of knowledge is the Qadr Chapter. There is a decoration for everything, .and the decoration of the Holy Qur'an is the Qadr Chapter

There is a canopy for everything, and the canopy of the devotees is the Qadr Chapter. There is a glad tiding for everything, and the glad tiding of the innocent is the Qadr Chapter. There is a Proof (Hujja) for everything, and the Hujja after the Prophet (S) is the Qadr Chapter; therefore, believe in it." He (as) was asked how to believe in it, and he answered, "That it shall occur in each and every year, and that everything ".revealed in it is true

He (as) is also quoted saying, "For anyone who recites the Qadr Chapter, God Almighty writes down a good deed for every particle of dust where he sits while reciting it." He (as) is also quoted saying, "It is a good companion for anyone who wishes to pay off his debt, esteem his creed, prolong his life-span, and improve his condition. Anyone who recites it quite often will meet Allah as a siddeeq and as a ".martyr

The book Misbah al-Mutahajjid quotes Muhammad ibn 'Isa, relying on the authority of the righteous, peace be upon them, says, "You should repeat the following invocation on the twenty-third night of the blessed month of Ramadhan either prostrating, standing

up, or sitting down, or in any other way, and during the entire month and however you .can, and whenever you are faced with hard times

Having glorified Allah and sent blessings unto the Prophet and his progeny, peace be upon all of them, you should say, 'Lord! Be for Your wali Muhammad ibn al-Hassan at this hour and at every hour of the night and the day a Protector, Guardian, Leader, Supporter, Guide and Reconnoiterer, till You let him reside in Your earth willingly and .grant him enjoyment therein for a long period of time

O You Who manages all affairs, Who brings life back to the residents of the graves, Who permits the oceans to flow and the iron to be pliant for David, peace be upon him, I pray You to send blessings unto Muhammad and the progeny of Muhammad,' then you mention your wish, raising your hands. You may repeat it while you are prostrating, kneeling, standing or sitting, and repeat it on the last night of the nights of ".the month of Ramadhan

(Invocation for the Twenty-Third Night (of the Month of Ramadhan

:This is narrated from the Messenger of Allah (S) and it is as follows

Praised One, Glorified, Lord of the angels and the Spirit, Praised One, Glorified, Lord" of the angels and the Throne, Praised One, Glorified, Lord of the heavens and the earth, Praised One, Glorified, Lord of the oceans and themountains; Praised One, ;Glorified, praised by the fish in the oceans, by the reptiles and the beasts and the hills

Praised One, Glorified, praised by the angels and those who are near to Him; Praised One, Glorified, Exalted, Vanquished everything and created everything in a measure. Praised, Praised, Praised, Praised, Praised, Praised, Praised! Glorified, Glorified, Glorified, Glorified, Glorified, Glorified, Glorified! I pray You to send blessings unto Muhammad (S) and the progeny of Muhammad (S) and to forgive me and have mercy ".on me, for You are the One, the Unique

:Then you ought to add the following

Lord! I pray You to make my share of every goodness You have sent down this night, " or are sending down this night to be the most generous, of light whereby You guide, or mercy You spread out, or sustenance You divide, or a tribulation You shun, or an evil you expose, and to write for me what you write for Your righteous servants who deserve Your rewards and who deserved security by pleasing You. You affect retribution. You give without a measure; You are the Generous One! I pray You to send blessings unto Muhammad (S) and the progeny of Muhammad (S) and to deal ".with me mercifully; You are the most Merciful of those who are merciful unto others

:Then you should say

I pray You like one who is poor and helpless, and I invoke You like one who is poor " and humble, and I ask you like one who has submitted willingly to You and admitted his wrong-doing and whose eyes have over-flown with tears, who is most helpless, who has no

other means, to grant me this night forgiveness for all my past sins, and to protect me from sinning for the rest of my life, to grant me pilgrimage and 'umra this year, to make it pilgrimage purely for the sake of achieving Your pleasure, and to enable me to always do so, and do not hinder me from visiting Your House and the grave-site of Your Messenger Muhammad, Your blessings and peace be upon him and his progeny.

And I plead You, Lord, not to let me remain in dire need of Your creatures, of the jinns and of mankind, of the Arabs and of the non-Arabs, of every being whom You can overpower; for You are on the right path. Lord! Grant me, Lord, of whatever You decide and decree of every destined matter on this night, the fate which cannot be avoided nor can it be altered, to visit Your sacred House among other pilgrims this year whose pilgrimage You appreciate and whose endeavor is forgiven and so are their sins, and to prolong my life-span, to increase my sustenance, and to grant me a dutiful son, for You can do whatever You will, and You are aware of everything."

What ought to be repeated every night of the last ten nights of the month

An annotation on al-Kaf'ami's book Al-Misbah contains an invocation narrated through the authority of Imam al-Sadiq (as). It is recommended to be repeated on each of the last ten nights of the month. The author indicates that he (as) used to say the following on each

:such night

Lord! You have said in Your revealed Book: ‘The month of Ramadhan is that in which " the Holy Qur'an was revealed, a guidance to men and clear proofs of the guidance and the distinction,' and You glorified the sanctity of the month of Ramadhan due to the Holy Qur'an which You revealed therein, assigning Lailatul-Qadr to it and making it better than a thousand months. Lord! These are the days of the month of !Ramadhan which have gone by and so have its nights. Lord

You are more knowledgeable than I, and more aware, of the number of Your devotees; so, I pray You in whatever Your angels who are close to You, Your messen- gers, and Your righteous devotees, pray You to send blessings unto Muhammad (S) and the progeny of Muhammad, and to free me from the fire, to let me enter into Paradise by Your mercy, and to be Gracious unto me, to forgive me, to accept my endeavor to be near to You, to respond to my invocation and to grant me security on the day when everyone will be terrified, apprehensive of the horrors prepared on the !Day of Judgment. Lord

I seek refuge with Your Glory and Great Prestige not to let the days and nights of the month of Ramadhan pass away without forgiving me for the sins for which You intend that I should atone. O Lord, Lord, Lord! I pray You, You with Whom there is no other god, for there is

no god but You, to be pleased with me in this month, and to be even more pleased with me if You were pleased with me before. So, be pleased with me, Lord, for You are the most Merciful of those who are merciful unto others, O You Who is the One and Only God, the One Independent of any need, the One Who did not beget nor is He "!begotten, nor is there ever the like of Him

:Then repeat the following at least three times

O You Who made the iron pliant to David, peace be upon him! O You Who removed " distress and the great agony from Jacob, peace be upon him! O You Who removed the distress of Joseph, peace be upon him! I pray You to send blessings unto Muhammad (S) and the progeny of Muhammad, for You are Capable of doing so, and ".not to punish me with the punishment that I deserve

(Zakatul–Fitr (Fitra

Zakatul-Fitr is a mandatory religious tax paid by those who can afford it at the end of the month of Ramadhan. It depends on the type of major item of food consumed by the believer during the year. This may be rice, wheat, barley, dates, etc. In weight, it should be at least three kilograms of food per person. It is also permissible to pay .cash of equivalent value

Due to the inflation and rising prices, we suggest that a fitra of $۵.۵۰ per person is reasonable. It must be paid by

the head of the family on behalf of his dependents, including servants of both sexes, and/or dependent relatives who are fed in his house. If a Muslim or even a non-Muslim guest arrives at someone's house prior to the night preceding Eidul-Fitr and dines with his host, it is incumbent on the latter to pay for the former's fitra.

If the guest arrives after sunset of the night preceding the Eid, fitra is not obligatory even if he dines with his host. If the guest who arrives before sunset does not dine, fitra is still obligatory on his host. It is better, however, if both host and guest give fitra. If one's wife is at her parents' house on the night preceding the Eid, her parents should take out her fitra. On the last day of the month of Ramadhan, if someone arranges a majlis which commences after sunset, and if he treats his guests to iftar, he does not have to pay fitra on their behalf.

Who receives Fitra

Fitra should be given to deserving believers whose income is not sufficient to spend on their families for one year. Fitra cannot be given to one's own dependents. Deserving neighbors and pious persons are good candidates to receive and enjoy the fitra. Fitra from Sayyids (descendants of Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and his progeny) can be given to poor Sayyids or non-Sayyids. Fitra from non-Sayyids cannot be given to Sayyids. If deserving persons are not easy

to find or identify, fitra should be sent to places where such persons can be found, or .the amount should be sent to a mujtahid who would do justice in its distribution

It is absolutely mandatory that the recipient of fitra be ‘adil, I.e., a just and fair person who can be trusted to distribute it properly, and it is necessary to ensure that fitra is not given to anyone who may in any possibility use it for sinful acts such as drinking .liquors, gambling, etc

Although it is permissible to send fitra to any place, it is better to distribute it to a deserving person locally. The time for giving fitra is from the night preceding Eidul-Fitr up till noon. If this is not possible for any reason, the amount of fitra must then be set aside and be distributed when deserving persons are present, or it may be sent to a mujtahid for proper distribution, and it cannot be paid prior to the time when it .becomes due. The best time to pay it is before noon prayers on Eid al-Fitr

Eid al–Fitr and its Prayers

Once the holy month of Ramadhan is over, the pious get ready to celebrate Eid al-Fitr, Feast of Fast-Breaking, to thank the Almighty who enabled them to fast and to remember the needy and the indigent. It is also customary on such an occasion to give gifts to the members of the family, especially children. Once it becomes known that the next day is going to

be the Eid, it is very highly recommended to spend the night preceding the Eid in .prayers and adoration

On p. ۱۰۴ of al-Saduq's Thawab al-A'mal, Muhammad ibn Ibrahim is quoted saying that he heard Isma'eel ibn Muhammad quoting Muhammad ibn Sulayman quoting Ahmed ibn Bakr-al-Farisi quoting Muhammadibn Mis'ab quoting Hammad quoting Thabit quoting the great sahabi Anas ibn Malik saying that the Messenger of Allah (S) has said, "The heart of anyone who spends the Eid night [the night preceding the Eid] ".will not die on the Day when the hearts die

How to perform the Eid prayers, what is recommended and what is not in its regard, and all fiqh related to it in the following paragraphs are excerpted from Vol. ۱ of Man la Yahduruhu al-Faqih by Shaykh (mentor) Abu Ja'far ibn Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn .(.Babawayh al-Qummi (۳۰۶ - ۳۸۱ A.H

Is the Eid prayer compulsory (Sunnah wajibah) or is it highly recommended (Sunnah mustahabbah)? Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq, whose followers are referred to as Shi'as Ja'faris Ithna-'Asheris, followers of the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (S) as outlined by Imam Ali (as) and according to the fiqh of Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) and who follow all the Infallible Twelve Imams (as), is quoted on p. ۳۳۹, Vol. ۱, of al-Saduq's book Man la Yahduruhu al-Faqih saying, "Prayers on both Eids (al-Fitr and al-Adha) ".are compulsory, and so is the prayer on the eclipse

The author comments on this weighty statement by saying that the Imam (as) means

they are among "minor obligations," that is, sighar al-faraiz, due to one narration by :Hareez which states the following

Zurarah quotes Imam Abu Ja'far (as) saying: "To pray both Eid prayers with an Imam is a Sunnah; no prayers should be performed before or after them on that occasion till (the time of zawal.(١)

He (as) is also quoted on the same page as saying, "No Eid prayers on both Eids should be offered without an Imam (a just one), but if you pray it by yourself, there is no harm in doing so." Hareez, on p. ٣۴٠ of the same reference, quotes Zurarah citing Imam Abu Ja'far al-Baqir (as) saying, "The Commander of the Faithful (Imam Ali), peace be upon him, used not to eat anything on Eid al-Adha till he eats of what he offers by way of sacrifice. And he used not to go out on Eid al-Fitr before eating ".something and paying the fitra." Then he added: "And we do likewise

How should the Eid (be it Eid al-Fitr or Eid al-Adha) prayers be performed? They are two rek'ats without iqamah or athan. The imam starts by calling "Allahu Akbar!" once, then he recites Surat al-Fatiha and "Sabbih ismi Rabbikal-A'la" (Surat al-A'la, The Most High, Chapter ٨٧, which is comprised of ١٩ verses), then he makes takbeer (by saying: "Allahu Akbar!") five times, then he makes qunoot followed by rukoo', then he .(is to prostrate twice (as is the case with fajr prayers

When he stands to perform the

١- The time of zawal is when the sun gets closer to midday. For example, if noon is at ١٢:٠٠ o'clock, the zawal is between ١٠:٣٠ and ١١:٠٠ am. The reason why the Imam (as) says that there should be no prayers performed before or after the Eid prayer is, .most likely, to highlight its great significance

second rek'a, he should recite Surat al-Fatiha followed by "Wal shamsi wa Duhaha, etc." (Surat al-Shams [The Sun], Chapter ٩١, which is comprised of ١٥ verses), followed by four takbeers, including takbeerat al-qiyam. Having made takbeer for the fifth time, he makes rukoo' and goes on to the prostrations as described above. What is recommended to be said during the qunoot (in the first rek'a) of a great occasion such as the Eid? We think the most beautiful supplication is one narrated by Muhammad ibn al-Fudayl who quotes Abu al-Sabah al-Kinani quoting Abu Abdullah Imam Ja'far :al-Sadiq (as), our sixth Imam, as follows

In order to benefit the readers who are not versed in Arabic, we would like to offer this modest translation of the sophisticated text cited above, imploring the Almighty to forgive us for falling short of matching the Arabic text (English never rises to the level of classic Arabic especially when it comes to prayers, the Holy Qur'an, and :(supplications

I testify that there is no god but Allah, the One and Only God, without any partner, and that Muhammad is His Servant and Messenger. Lord! You are the Lord of greatness and magnanimity, generosity and might, potence, authority and dignity! I plead to You on this Day which You have made as an Eid for the Muslims and as a treasure for Muhammad (S) and an increase (in his prestige), to bless Muhammad and the progeny of Muhammad, to also bless Your angels who are near to You

as well as all Your deputied messengers, and to forgive us and all believing men and .women, and all Muslim men and women, the living and the dead

O Lord! I plead to You to grant me of the best of that for which your righteous servants plead to You, and I seek refuge with You against all (evil) from which Your righteous servants seek refuge with You. Allah is the First and the Last of everything, the One Who knows everything and Who brings them back to life. The destiny of everything is to Him and so is its return. He is the One Who manages the affairs and brings life back to those in the graves. He accepts good deeds and unveils what is hidden; He reveals the secrets of the hearts. Allahu Akbar! His Kingdom is great; He is the ever-Living Who never dies; when He decrees a thing, He only says to it "Be!" and it is! To You are the voices humbled and the faces succumb, and no vision can ever .reach him, nor can any tongue glorify You enough

All forelocks are in Your grip and all affairs are referred to You: none can judge in their regard besides You, nor can anything be accomplished without Your aid. Allahu Akbar! Your protection encompasses everything; Your Dignity subdues everything; Your command overwhelms everything, and everything stands through You. Everything is humbled to Your greatness; everything is subjected to Your Exaltation; everything ,surrenders to Your will

!and everything is a subject in Your Kingdom! Allahu Akbar

The same reference contains other such sermons for those who appreciate them and .who seek nearness to Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala through reciting them

Conclusion

It is hoped that this small book has shed some light on the significance of fast in Islam and on the greatness of the month of Ramadhan. It is also hoped that it has made some readers realize the importance of considering this life as a golden and unique opportunity to prepare for the life to come. It is also hoped that those who read this .book will share its knowledge with others rather than keep it all to themselves

This is a book, we believe, which should not be left on the shelf to collect dust but circulated among our community to bring them closer to their Maker and to make them more serious about their creed. One hadith says: "For everything there is zakat, ".and the zakat of knowledge is its dissemination

Does one who knows something useful have any choice with regard to sharing what he knows with others? Is it up to him whether to inform others of it or to just remain ?silent and keep it all to himself? Is there a free will to excercise in this regard

If you think that the answer to these questions is in the affirmative, read the following verses of the Holy Qur'an and see how the Almighty curses and condemns those who know and

:who do not share their knowledge with others

Surely those who conceal the clear proofs and the guidance that We revealed, having made it clear in the Book for men, these it is whom Allah shall curse, and those who (curse shall curse them (too). (Holy Qur'an, Surah Baqarah ۲:۱۵۹

Allah made a covenant with those who were given the Book: You shall certainly make it known to men, and you shall not hide it, but they cast it behind their backs and took (a small price for it; so evil is that which they buy. (Holy Qur'an, Surah Ale-Imran ۳:۱۸۷

Do not mix the truth with falsehood, nor should you hide the truth while knowing it. (Holy Qur'an, (Qur'an Surah Baqarah ۲:۴۲

Holy Qur'an ۳:۱۸۷ above refers to the People of the Christians and Jews who were given knowledge by the Almighty and who did not disseminate it. Ironically, they regard hiding knowledge as one of the "seven deadly sins," the sins which can never .be forgiven

Does Islam forgive those who have knowledge and who hide it or fail to share it with others? On p. ۶۷, Vol. ۲, of Bihar al-Anwar, Imam Mousa ibn Ja'far (as) quotes his forefathers citing the Messenger of Allah (S) saying, "One who reneges from his oath of allegiance, or who promotes what misleads people, or hides some knowledge with him, or confines some wealth with him unjustly, or knowingly aids an oppressor in committing oppression while being fully aware of his oppression, is outside the folds

".of Islam

Truly if you consider this hadith, you will find it awe-inspiring. One who hides knowledge, according to this hadith, is on the same level with one who deliberately assists oppressors and oppression. Islam is clear of those who deliberately and in any way hide useful knowledge; so, we seek refuge with Allah, dear reader, against being among them. Rather, we should spare no means to share what we know with others. .Good knowledge is like a good seed: once sown, it will Insha-Allah grow and multiply

The Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) is quoted on p. ۶۷, Vol. ۲, of :Bihar al-Anwar, saying, "The creed stands on four pillars

;a scholar who informs people of the knowledge which he has and who acts upon it (۱

a wealthy person who is not miserly when giving those who safeguard the religion (۲ ;of Allah

a poor person who does not sell his hereafter in order to buy the life of this world; (۳ and

an ignorant person who is never too proud to seek knowledge." What a beautiful (۴ !statement

Here we have to stop for a moment to ask ourselves: "Who is qualified enough to be called a scholar, an 'alim, one to whom the Almighty refers in one of the most Glorious :of Qur'anic verses

Surely those among Allah's servants who fear Him most are the scholars ('ulema)'' ?"((Holy Qur'an, Surah Fatir ۳۵:۲۸

The answer is provided by the very best man who ever

walked on the face of planet Earth: our beloved Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and his pure and sinless Progeny: "Each one of you is an ‘alim (scholar) so long as he pursues knowledge, but when he thinks he achieved it, then he becomes ignorant." Ignorant are the haughty ones who think that "they know it all." Although he (S) was the embodiment of each and every imaginable virtue, he (S) :nevertheless was ordered by his Maker to

.(Say: Lord! Increase my share of knowledge!" (Holy Qur'an, Surah Taha ۲۰:۱۱۴"

The Holy Prophet of Islam (S) is quoted on p. ۶۶, Vol. ۲, of Bihar al-Anwar, saying, "Jesus son of Mary (as) once stood to address the Israelites and said, ‘O Children of Israel! Do not impart wisdom to the ignorant else you should do knowledge injustice, nor should you prohibit those who seek it from doing so else you should do them injustice." The Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali (as) is quoted on p. ۶۷, Vol. ۲, of Bihar al-Anwar, saying, "One who hides some knowledge with which he is familiar is ".as good as the ignorant

Al-Majlisi quotes Ibn al-Walid quoting al-’Ubaydi quoting al-Dahqan quoting Durust quoting Imam Abu Abdullah al-Sadiq (as) saying that four things will always be lost: ۱) friendship you grant to someone who is untrustworthy; ۲) a favor to someone who does not appreciate it; ۳) knowledge imparted upon someone who is not inclined to listen to it; and

.a secret you share with someone who lacks discretion (۴

Not all people are inclined to learn, and unfortunately few are those who share what they learn with others. One of my favorite axioms says: "Do not cast pearls before swine." Pearls of wisdom, when cast before the dumb, will not be held with any .esteem. Give this book to someone who appreciates it

The kind reader is requested to send me an email to tell me what he thinks of this book, what suggestions he has to improve its second edition, and whether it in any way helped him/her realize how great fast is, how significant our life on this earth is, and how Allah looks upon knowledge and those who disseminate it. Some Internet .sites have my current email address

And if you appreciate the time and effort exerted in writing this book, please recite Surat al-Fatiha for the soul of my father the late al-Hajj Tu'ma Abbas al-Jibouri and for the souls of all believing Muslim men and women, the living and the dead, and rest assured that you will be richly rewarded by the Most Generous and Compassionate .One for doing so

Reciting the Fatiha for all believing men and women, the living and the dead, should be the daily practice of every Muslim especially after performing the daily prayers. It is also a good habit to do so while you are on your way to work or back home .therefrom. Life is too short to be wasted

If you do so, you will Insha-Allah taste the sweetness of iman, and none of this fleeting world's worries and woes will trouble or harm you, Insha-Allah... What !?happiness is greater than that

We pray Allah Ta'ala to accept our prayers and fast and yours, and to reward all of us with everlasting bliss and happiness in this life and the life to come, Allahomma .Aameen, Wassalamo Alaikom wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh

Glossary

Adil:fair, just‘

Adl:the concept of the justice of God‘

Ahadith:singular of hadith, a statement (usually attributed either to the Prophet [S] or (to one of the members of his Progeny [as] or companions

Ahilla:plural of hilal, crescent

Alim:scholar, theologian, a highly knowledgeable person‘

A’mal:highly recommended acts of adoration

Arsh:literally: throne, symbol of the Almighty's Authority‘

Ashar:plural of sahar, the time immediately preceding daybreak

.Athan:the call for prayers; muaththin is one who performs athān

(Ayat:verse (from a sacred scripture

Barzakh:the place and time wherein the souls of the dead live a life of their own prior .to the Day of Judgment; see the Holy Qur'an, ٢٣:١٠٠

Beed:plural of abyad, white

Dahr:time, age, eternity

Dinar:an Islamic (now Arab) gold currency varying in weight

Dirham:an Islamic silver currency weighing approx. ۳.۱۲ grams

Du’a:supplication, invocation

Eid:an Islamic feast, a joyous celebration, a merry occasion

Faaizeen:winners

Fajr:daybreak

Faqih:jurist, one who is knowledgeable in Islamic jurisprudence

Farasikh:plural of farsakh, parasang (a loan Persian word), a measure of length (distance). According to Lisan al-’Arab, it may be three to six miles. "It is called so," the author of Lisan al-’Arab goes on, "because one who walks one farsakh will have to sit ",to rest

suggesting that the original meaning of the word is: to halt, to come to a stand still, to .rest

Fatawa:plural of fatwā, a religious edict or decision

Fiqh:the science of Islamic jurisprudence

Firdaws:Paradise

Fitra:the amount (in cash or kind) paid to the needy at the end of the month of Ramadhan; see text for more details

Ghazwa:a military campaign, invasion

Ghusul:ceremonial bath

Hadith:(singular:) tradition, a statement made by Prophet Muhammad (S); its plural is: ahadith

Hadi:sacrificial animals offered at Mecca's holy precincts

Hajj:Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca during the prescribed period

Halal:Islamically permissible, admissible, allowed

Hilal:crescent, singular of ahilla

Haram:Islamically prohibitive, inadmissible, forbidden

Hujja:proof, argument, authority

Huri:heavenly wife with large lovely eyes married to the male residents of Paradise

Ihram:pilgrimage garb, white unwoven cotten shroud worn by pilgrims

Ijtihad:the degree one reaches in order to be qualified as a mujtahid, one who is capable of deriving religious decisions on his own

.Illiyeen:the highest pinnacle of Paradise; see Holy Qur'an, ۸۳:۱۸'

Imam:leader of an ummah, a group of people (small or big); he may be the one who leads others in congregational prayers, or a supreme relgious authority, or one of the (Twelve Infallible Imams (as

Isha:nighttime, evening'

Isnad:the method whereby one hadith is traced and in the end attributed to a muhaddith, traditionist, one who transmitted it the first time

I'tikaf:the act of remaining most of the time at a mosque for prayers and supplications

Iftar:the time or the meal to break the fast

Iqamah:the statements recited immediately before starting the ritual prayer

Isnad:the rendering of a quoted statement to its chain of narrators and transmitters

Israa:night journey; usually a reference to the Prophet's night journey

from Mecca to Jerusalem

Jahannam:hell

Jahiliyya:pre-Islamic period of ignorance

Jami'a:inclusive, universal, university

Janabah:uncleanness caused by seminal discharge

Jannat:heaven, Paradise, garden, singular of jannaat

Jihad:a struggle, an effort exerted, or a war waged in defense of Islam

Kaffara:atonement from sin

Kafir:infidel, apostate, atheist, one who does not believe in the existence of the Creator

Kalima:synonymous to "shahada," it is a Muslim's declaration of faith (that is, to testify that there is no god except Allah, and that Muhammad (S) is the Messenger of Allah), and it is always pronounced in Arabic

Kantar:in Arabic: qintaar, avarying weight of ۱۰۰ ratls (rotls); a ratl in Syria is roughly ۳.۲۰۲ kg., whereas in England it is ۴۴۹.۲۸ grams, and in Lebanon it is ۲.۵۶۶ kg

Khums:one-fifth of one's savings (usually paid by Shi'a Muslims) set aside from annual income

Kursi:literally: chair, symbol of the Almighty's Seat of Judgment and Authority; see Holy Qur'an, ۲:۲۵۵

Khutba:lecture, sermon; a speech delivered on a specific occasion

Kufr:apostacy, infidelity, disbelief

Labbayk:an exclamation conveying the meaning of "At your service!" or "Here I am!"

Ma'ad:the Return: a reference to the returning of the souls to their new bodies after the period of barzakh (see above), and their ultimate returning to their Maker for .judgment; generally, it is used to refer to death and the life hereafter

Majalis:meetings or gatherings held to commemmorate certain religious occasion, mostly applied to those held during the month of Muharram or to recite the Fatiha for a deceased person; singular of majlis, a place where people sit

Marji' taqlid:the highest theological authority-referee followed

Mash'ar:a place where certain rites are to be conducted, a

sacred area or place or precinct

Mawla:depending on its usage, it may mean either "master" or "slave," or it may mean one who is most fit for a specific position of honor and prestige. Derived from the adjective awla (one who is best qualified), it means: the person who is best suited .to be the religious and temporal leader of all Muslims

Mi’raj:ascension to heaven

Mithqal:a weight equivalent to ۲۴ karats or ۴.۶۸ grams

Mu'min:believer, one who has iman, conviction, true belief

Mujtahid:one who acquires the degree of ijtihad and thus becomes capable of deriving religious decisions on his own

Musnad:a compilation of traditions (ahadith) which are consecutively and chronologically traced to their transmitters

Mutawatir:consecutively reported, traced by a perfect chronological chain of ascertained narrators of hadith

Nafl:optional, non-compulsory, supererotatory, highly recommended act of worship

Najasa:uncleanness, impurity

Nathr:One's pledge to do something very good to show appreciation for the Almighty's favorable response to his supplication and the attainment of his worldly wish

Noor:divine or celestial light

Nubuwwah:prophethood, the belief in prophets and their messages

Qaniteen:those who are constantly supplicating

Qaza:compensatory, making up for a missed rite

Qibla:direction towards the Ka'ba, Mecca

Qiyam:standing

Qudsi:divine, related to the Almighty

Qunoot:supplication during prayers

(Rek'at:prostration (during prayer or a ritual

Rukoo':kneeling

Sabeel:path, way, avenue

Sadaqa:(singular:) charity offered voluntarily; its plural is: sadaqaāt

Sadeed:pus collected from bleeding wounds to be served to the sinners in hell when they ask for water to quench their thirst

Sahaba:(singular:) companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S); its plural is: sahābi

Sahabi:companion (e.g. of the Holy Prophet), one of the sahaba

Saheefa:tablet, scroll, parchment, a written document

Sahih:literally: authentic, correct, accurate; it is generally used to

refer to the collection, group of collections, or book, of verified and authenticated (ahadith of the Holy Prophet (S

Shahada:martyrdom

Shahr:month

Shaikh:also syakh, an honoring title with many meanings; literally, it means an old man; in Islamic theology and philosophy, however, it is used to denote a mentor, professor, or scholar of a high calibre

Shari'a:Islam's legislative system

Shirk:polytheism, the belief in the existence of partners with God

Shubha:(singular) doubt, suspicion; its plural is: shubuhat

Shura:the principle of mutual consultation, Islam's form of democracy

Siddeeq:one who testifies to the truthfulness of a prophet

Sirat:path, highway; same as Sabeel

Siyam:Islam's norm of fast

Suhoor:time or meal taken before daybreak in preparation to fast during the day

Sunan:plural of sunnah: a highly commended act of worship or way whereby a Muslim seeks nearness to Allah

Tabi'een:plural of tabi', one who follows and learns from a Sahabi

Tabi'I:(singular:) one who accompanied for a good period of time and learned from a sahabi, a companion of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S); its plural is: tabi'een

Tafsïr:(singular:) exegesis or explanation of Qur'anic verses; its plural is: tafasïr

Tahara:purification, the act of removing najasa, uncleanness or impurity

Takbeer:the act of glorifying Allāh by declaring in an audible voice: "Allaho Akbar!" !Allah is Great

Taqiyya:one's way of exerting precaution in order to save his life when it is in jeopardy, Shi'as' way of trying to survive against the presence of sure perils

Taqleed:the concept of following a mujtahid or an authority recognized as the a'alam, the most knowledgeable in Islamics

Tarwiyah:The Day of Tarwiyah is the ٨th of Thul-Hijjah when the pilgrims fill their water bags

p: ٢٢٩

.and prepare to go to Mina

Tashahhud:the testimony regarding Allah being the Lord and Muhammad (S) being His Servant and Messenger; it is the uttering of "Ashhadu an la ilaha illa-Allah, wa "anna Muhammad abdoho wa rasooloh

Tashreeq:the cutting and sun-drying of sacrificed meat

Tawaf:circling around a certain sacred site

Tawatur:consecutive reporting, the tracing of one particular hadith to its respective chronological chain of narrators

Tawhid:the concept of the absolute Unity of God, the belief that God is One and indivisible, One__and Only One__God

Tawwabeen:the penitent ones, those who repented their reluctance to go to the rescue of Imam Husayn (as) when he was confronted with Yazid's armies and who enlisted under the military command of al-Mukhtār and pursued those who massacred Imam Hussain ibn Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) and killed them

Thakireen:those who often mention the Name of the Almighty and Glorify Him

Thayyib:a deflowered woman, a widow or divorcee

Thireed:pieces of bread cut and dipped in stew

Ulema:plural of ‘ālim, scholar-theologian‘

Ummah:nation, group of people

Umra:the pilgrimage to Mecca during any time other than the prescribed (first ten)‘ days of the month of Thul-Hijjah

Usool:the basics of jurisprudence

Waqf:a piece of property dedicated for the promotion of any particular good cause

Wajib:compulsory, obligatory, binding

Wali:person to whom wilayat is obligatory

Wasi:successor to a prophet

Wilayat:supreme authority that combines both temporal and religious authority

Wisal:fasting the last day of every lunar calendar month

Wudu:ablution

Zakat:Literally, it means "purification;" it is a compulsory ٢.٥٪ tax on one of three categories of wealth: ١) metal coins (gold, silver, etc.), ٢) grain crops (barley, wheat, grain, rice, etc.), and ٣) animals raised

for food consumption. Zakat is somehow a complicated issue, and for details, readers are advised to consult books dealing with fiqh. Among its types are: zakat al-mal (taxable wealth accumulated during one full year), and zakat al-fitr (a tax to be paid by the head of a household at the end of the fast of the month of Ramadhan).

Zihar:the making of a similitude between the back of one's wife with that of his mother; I.e. saying that his wife's back looks similar to his mother's

...And surely Allah knows best

About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ۹

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ۲۰۰۷, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the .cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

encouraging the populace particularly the youth in investigating the religious issues-

replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

providing services for seminary and university researchers-

spreading culture study in the publich-

paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

:Policies

acting according to the legal licenses-

relationship with similar centers-

avoiding parallel working-

merely presenting scientific contents-

mentioning the sources-

.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

:Other activities of the institute

Publication of books, booklets and other editions-

Holding book reading competitions-

Producing virtual, three dimensional exhibitions, panoramas of religious and tourism- places

.Producing animations, computer games and etc-

Launching the website with this address: www.ghaemiyeh.com-

Fabricatingdramatic and speech works-

Launching the system of answering religious, ethical and doctrinal questions-

Designing systems of accounting, media and mobile, automatic and handy systems,- web kiosks

Holding virtual educational courses for the public-

Holding virtual teacher-training courses-

Producing thousands of research software in three languages (Persian, Arabic and- English) which can be performed in computers, tablets and cellphones and available and downloadable with eight international formats: JAVA, ANDROID, EPUB, CHM, PDF, HTML, CHM, GHB on the website

Also producing four markets named "Ghaemiyeh Book Market" with Android, IOS,- WINDOWS PHONE and WINDOWS editions

:Appreciation

We would appreciate the centers, institutes, publications, authors and all honorable .friends who contributed their help and data to us to reach the holy goal we follow

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